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**Independent External Final  
Evaluation of  
RCLES  
Reducing Child Labor through Education  
Services in Burkina Faso**

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**Final Report- July 2017**

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**O'BRIEN &  
ASSOCIATES**  
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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APE/PTA	Association des Parents d'élèves/Parent and Teacher Association
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEBNF	Non Formal basic education center
CL	Child labor
CLMS	Child Labor Monitoring System
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
CPN	Child Protection Networks
COGES	School Management Committees
CI	Counterpart International
DCIs	Data Collection Instruments
DCT	Data Collection Table
DLTE	Direction de la Lutte contre le travail des Enfants
DPENA	Provincial Department of Education Ministry
DRENA	Regional Department of Education Ministry
GTPE	Groupe de Travail pour la Protection de l'Enfance
IGA	Income Generating Activities
ILO	International Labor Organization
NAP	National Action Plan on Child Labor
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
DBMS	Direct Beneficiaries Monitoring System
FAAB	Farming as a Business
FFS	Farmer Field schools
HQ	Head Quarters
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTA	Mother Teachers Associations
MOL	Ministry of Labor
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OCFT	Office for Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
RCLES	Reducing Child Labor Through Education and Services
SPCF	Social Protection community Facilitators (volunteers)
TdH	Terre des Hommes
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Technical Progress Report
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
VSLA	Village saving Loan associations
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### **Project Context**

Child labor is rampant in Burkina Faso, often considered a necessity for the basic survival of families. Conditions cross into the worst forms of child labor, including dangerous activities such as agriculture and mining. In 2011, gold production had increased 32 percent since 2009 at six commercial gold mine sites, making Burkina Faso the fourth-largest gold producer in Africa. The boom at commercial mines encouraged a burgeoning industry of small-holder, artisanal mines throughout the country. Children are engaged in actual mining, which is extremely dangerous, and also in many ancillary activities.

The cotton plantations where RCLES works are mostly smallholdings run either by a family or by a landowner. The work can be rough and demanding, often requiring more than a child should be expected to handle. According to informants during the interim evaluation, most children no longer work where chemicals are used or in similarly hazardous activities, but they do carry heavy loads, work in the hot sun for long hours and use crude tools to cut trees and brush. Mothers have their small children with them because there are no nurseries. These small children may be exposed to toxic products.

### **Project Description**

The project goal was to reduce the number of children aged 6–17 years who are working, or at risk of working, in either the agricultural cotton production or gold mining sectors in Burkina Faso. Specifically, RCLES intended reach 10,000 Burkinabe children and withdraw them from or prevent them from engaging in the hazardous work.

As stated in the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), the project objective was to contribute to reducing the incidence of child labor in the cotton fields and artisanal gold mining sites in the Cascades, Hauts-Bassins and Boucle du Mouhoun regions by the end of 2016.

Project activities provided access to education and training services for target children and improve the economic well-being of families and households through youth employment and livelihood opportunities so that children need not be engaged in working. Other activities included strengthening the capacity of government agencies to fight against child labor (CL); raising awareness about child labor in the general public; and fostering sustainability of project efforts through capacity building and technical support. These action components of RCLES may be described as awareness raising and social protection; education; livelihoods and youth employment; and strengthening institutional capacity and policies, and are listed as such in the budget under “activities.”

### **Evaluation Overview**

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the RCLES project achieved its outcomes and the sustainability of those outcomes. The evaluation also examined which factors

proved critical in helping or hindering results and potential sustainability. Finally, the evaluation identified key lessons learned, good practices, and recommendations for future projects.

The evaluation aims at providing the Office for Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT), the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's experience in implementation, its effects on project beneficiaries, and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will serve to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate. The evaluation questions appear in the Terms of Reference (TOR) in Annex A.

The evaluation was conducted between March 13 and May 2, 2017. The evaluator reviewed project documents, developed data collection instruments, and prepared for the fieldwork during the week of March 24. Fieldwork was conducted in Burkina Faso from April 3 to 14. The fieldwork culminated with a presentation and discussion of the preliminary findings with key project stakeholders on April 13. The bulk of the data analysis and report writing occurred from April 17 to April 29.

## **Findings and Conclusions**

### *Effectiveness*

The implementation of project activities was significantly influenced by the political unrest the country experienced during 2014-15. Once the political situation stabilized, RCLES began implementation in early 2016; however, the actual implementation schedule was considerably reduced. Also, differences on several issues caused disagreement between Terre des Hommes (TdH) and Counterpart International (CI), which resulted in TdH withdrawing from RCLES early on in the project.

Despite these challenges, the project achieved most of the expected outcomes.

In all, and throughout the three regions in which the project intervened, 8,559 children (4,073 girls and 4,486 boys) were provided with education or vocational services. Due to the above-mentioned events, the project's start-up was delayed. Thus, although the level of achievement is 14.41% below the initial target, the evaluation considers that the project attained significant results in increasing access to relevant education for children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor.

The project was successful in establishing solid relationships with a wide range of Burkinabe Government Agencies, both at the central, regional and provincial level, as well as with national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

The project's partnerships contributed to building a culture of collective action against child labor by increasing cooperation among different actors. There is evidence that this has led to the formation/reinforcement of the *Reseaux de Protection de l'Enfance* (RPE, Child Protection Networks) in the regions targeted by the project.

Furthermore, RCLES provided support to the Ministry of Labor (MOL) to review, update and validate the list of Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL).

The MOL, with the support of the RCLES project, started the implementation of Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS) pilot phase in 6 villages from 2 provinces of the Boucle du Mouhoun region. The MOL/Direction de la lute contre le travail des enfants (DLTE) intend to evaluate and scale-up the CLMS.

There is potential to build up on the RCLES achievements by supporting the evaluation of the pilot CLMS and on the basis of its results, further explore the possibility of scaling-up the CLMS.

### *Validity of the ToC and CMEP*

The project's Theory of Change (ToC) is all-encompassing and the strategy and intervention methodologies chosen were, in general, appropriate for correctly addressing the causal factors behind child labor in the areas and sectors targeted by the project. The project followed a sound intervention strategy as it worked towards building stronger links between child labor elimination interventions and education.

Due especially to the delays in the project's kick-off and the resources available, RCLES could have been more effective by focusing its interventions in fewer regions, provinces and communities (and schools).

Also, as project staff explained, "there were pre-defined targets that we had to reach; often very ambitious in relation to the socio-political context; the large geographical area to be covered; and the available human and financial resources".

There is consensus among project staff that CMEP was instrumental for project monitoring and management. However, the CMEP is regarded by project staff to be a highly complicated tool that needs highly trained staff to correctly manage it.

Data reported under the CMEP indicators are generally accurate and reliable. Project staff and Social Protection community Facilitators (SPCFs) take their responsibilities regarding data collection, analysis and reporting seriously.

### *Potential Impact*

The livelihood component of the project generated a significant impetus in the communities and in particular, the VSLAs seem to hold promising prospects in increasing beneficiary households' income, which could eventually have an impact in improving school enrollment, attendance and thus contribute to decreasing the prevalence of child labor.

Through RCLES, different options were offered to child workers/children at risk, including formal/non-formal education and skills training. Also, the project conducted awareness-raising



campaigns; provided economic support to cover education costs; and offered livelihood options to families.

Child labor involvement among beneficiary children was 50.83% at the inception of the project (baseline data); and 15.24% at the end of the project, according to project data.

Village Saving and Loan associations (VSLA) groups provide for better support for their households. This translated into an increase of revenue that now contributes to the necessary expenses for their children to go to school and, to a certain extent, pay for their health care. Furthermore, through VSLA groups, women gained recognition from their communities, particularly among men, and are becoming well-respected members in their villages.

By the end of the project, according to the project's Technical Progress Reports (TPRs), households with an increase in assets represented 47.60%.

### Sustainability

The RCLES sustainability strategy is twofold. First, the project was designed based on an integrated approach aimed at creating stronger links between child labor elimination and education through awareness raising; addressing education-based child labor drivers; and improving household livelihoods.

Secondly, the project's approach to sustainability was successful in building capacities and working directly through local structures and stakeholders: community members, teachers and Parents and Teachers Associations (PTAs), Community Based Organization (CBOS), SPCFs, as well as with Government agencies at the central and regional levels.

The evaluation found a well-defined approach for sustainability. The project's strategy had a clear and pertinent theory and has been generally accepted by local populations and stakeholders, as well as, by regional and national authorities.

Taking into consideration that these approaches are certainly appropriately targeted, further efforts (namely technical assistance and financial support) should be invested in order to reinforce the project's sustainability, including: Knowledge and capacities for national, regional and local stakeholders; ownership among project partners and stakeholders; national policies and law enforcement; awareness on child labor and education; access to quality education; livelihood services; and, CLMS.

### **Lessons Learned**

1. A lesson learned from RCLES is that, when implementing a project in tandem, grantees and their partners must clearly define and formally agree on strategies; operating and administrative procedures; responsibilities; division of tasks, areas of intervention, activities; human resources management and salaries; etc. well before its kick-off.
2. In Burkina Faso, a country with heavily centralized administrations, it was necessary for CI to establish their HQ in the country's capital. Decisions are regularly made at the central/national level, and bureaucracy is weighty and demands permanent coordination

with the concerned Ministries. Being in close proximity facilitates a swift implementation of project activities.

3. The project's large coverage and the vast amount of targeted beneficiary children, along with limited results and time-frame, did not contribute to supporting its implementation and also, somehow limited the "quality approach to education" sought by the project.
4. The RCLES reduced implementation schedule hindered the likelihood of achieving substantial long-term effects since they require a deep change in social habits. For education to become a strong alternative to child labor, both the mentality of the people involved must change and also the real returns from education must be seen clearly.

### **Good Practices**

1. Offering varied education services, such as primary education, secondary education and skills training provided a varied array of opportunities that were able to adjust to the diverse contexts and children's' needs.
2. Improving capacities and awareness of community and school members by way of training and learning meetings. The "school community" improved its capabilities to deal with child labor issues, and community members became more attentive and aware of child labor issues.
3. By increasing household incomes, the project decreased some of the burden of children having to work and allowed them to participate in educational activities. Addressing poverty is an effective way of fighting child labor and enrolling children in school.
4. Farmer Field schools (FFS) and Farming as Business (FAB) allowed beneficiaries to be trained in their village in a trade they already knew. Through VSLAs, access to financial services, savings and credit, could facilitate re-investment, growth and more access to credit and thus improve their economic activities and income. In the long term, this has the potential for further improving school enrollment and reducing child labor.

### **Recommendations**

1. Provide further financial and technical assistance to sustain the results achieved to date.

Further support (technical assistance, funds, linkages to other resources, government resources) to key project interventions will greatly contribute to strengthening the sustainability of the achieved results.

2. Reinforce awareness raising on child labor and education

It is essential to continue to build awareness regarding child labor and the importance of education. Also, further support and follow-up for children enrolled in school is key to ensuring that they complete their respective cycles and is highly recommended. Additional technical support and funding are needed to reduce the dropout rate, while tackling early marriages and pregnancies is essential to ensuring that girls attend and remain in school.

3. More emphasis should be placed on improving the quality of education

Quality education is key in preventing and fighting child labor, but also child labor seriously hinders school enrolment and attendance. In Burkina Faso, the quality of education continues to be a challenge that needs to be addressed by the government with financial and technical support from the donor community.

#### 4. Reinforce and expand the livelihood options

It is necessary to continue providing technical assistance and external support in order to better develop and extend livelihood activities and reinforce their sustainability prospects. In the short-term, it is urgent that:

- The Ministry of Agriculture continues to provide its support to the FAB and FFS beneficiaries.
- The Ministry of Animal Husbandry provides further support to the FAB beneficiaries.
- Counterpart International must give priority to negotiations with the *Caisse Populaire d'Epargne* (before the end of the project) so that VSLA and FAB beneficiaries can benefit from its services.
- Counterpart International must also prioritize the distribution of the installation kits to young trainees so they can start their business/trades as soon as possible.
- RCLES and MOL/Department of Youth should provide certification of completion for skills training to ensure recognition of the training received and the competences acquired by participants in the “apprenticeship” modality.
- RCLES should bring on board the apprentices’ masters, so they can mentor trainees after receiving their installation kits and supervise and counsel the start-up of their business.
- The Ministry of Youth should support young trainees to facilitate their transition into the job market.

#### 5. Strengthen the role of trade unions

Future child labor interventions should consider strengthening the role of trade unions in awareness-raising and mobilization.

#### 6. Participation of the industry

Future interventions should make efforts for the cotton and gold industries to participate in the campaign against child labor. These industries must commit to respecting fundamental rights at work, including the elimination of child labor.

#### 7. Exit strategy

Counterpart International should prepare a sustainability or "exit" strategy before the end of the project. It is also advisable that CI convene the Group de Travail por la Protection de l'Enfance (GTPE) to present the RCLES achievements and pending issues and look for opportunities for other NGOs/agencies to carry on certain activities.

#### 8. Support to CLMS

Support should be provided to carry out an evaluation of the pilot CLMS and socialize its results; and, eventually, based on its results, support its scale-up. The organization of a "donor conference" by the MOL might be useful in mobilizing potential partners and donors in supporting the CLMS scale-up.

#### 9. CMEP training

A CMEP is essential in USDOL child labor projects' management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. However, its implementation is complex and needs highly trained human resources.

In future projects, and after the initial CMEP workshops, the USDOL should provide a thorough training on the CMEP, not only for M&E officers; but also to Project Managers and Project Specialists. The USDOL might also consider to devise a form of "continuous training" in cases where project staff turnover is high and frequent.

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## **I. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION**

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### **1.1. Project Context**

Burkina Faso is a small, landlocked country that, throughout its 55 years of independence, has always been desperately poor. The country is ranked 181 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) each year<sup>1</sup>. Its dry climate with periodic drought has made food security and access to water difficult for the population of around 17 million people. Only 11 percent of the population, mostly in urban centers, has access to water<sup>2</sup>. Low literacy, overcrowded schools, chronic malnutrition, high maternal mortality and other grim indices contribute to high vulnerability, especially for children.

Child labor is rampant, often considered a necessity for the basic survival of families. Conditions cross into the worst forms of child labor, including dangerous activities such as agriculture and mining. In 2011, gold production had increased 32 percent since 2009 at six commercial gold mine sites, making Burkina Faso the fourth-largest gold producer in Africa. The boom at commercial mines encouraged a burgeoning industry of smallholder, artisanal mines throughout the country. Children are engaged in actual mining and many ancillary activities, which are extremely dangerous. For example, products that must be hauled into the sites, such as drinking water, are triple the normal cost and afford a good day's wage for young teenagers. Children can be seen all around the squatter camps engaged in petty vending, breaking rocks, hauling and other moderately to extremely hazardous activities.

The cotton plantations where RCLES works are mostly smallholdings run either by a family or by a landowner. The work can be rough and demanding, often requiring more than a child should be expected to handle. According to informants during the interim evaluation, most children no longer work where chemicals are used or in similarly hazardous activities, but they do carry heavy loads, work in the hot sun for long hours and use crude tools to cut trees and brush. Mothers have their small children with them because there are no nurseries. These small children may be exposed to toxic products.

### **1.2. Project Description**

The project goal is to reduce the number of children aged 6–17 years who are working, or at risk of working, in the agricultural cotton production or gold mining sectors in Burkina Faso. Specifically, RCLES intends to reach 10,000 children and withdraw them from or prevent them from engaging in the hazardous work. The direct beneficiaries of the project and desired outcomes are summarized as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> RCLES CMEP

<sup>2</sup> RCLES CMEP

- 4,000 children and youth aged 6–17 years, withdrawn from exploitative child labor in cotton fields and artisanal gold mining and enrolled in educational programs.
- 6,000 at-risk children and youth, aged 6–17 years, prevented from exploitative child labor in cotton fields and artisanal gold mining and enrolled in educational programs, including:
  - 2,000 presently in school
  - 4,000 children not presently in school
- 1,000 households of children engaged in, or at risk of being engaged in, child labor in the cotton fields and artisanal gold mining develop safe and alternative sources of livelihood and income.

As stated in the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), the project objective is to contribute to reducing the incidence of child labor in the cotton fields and artisanal gold mining sites in the Cascades, Hauts-Bassins and Boucle du Mouhoun regions by the end of 2016. To achieve its general objective, the project has identified the following five Intermediary Objectives (IOs):

I.O.1: Target populations' attitudes changed to reflect a negative view of child labor/hazardous child labor and a positive view of education.

I.O.2: Use of social protection services by target households has increased.

I.O.3: Target children and youth have increased participation in education.

I.O.4: The incomes and assets of target households and youth have increased.

I.O.5: Public sector, cotton and gold producers and community structures address child labor.

Project activities provide access to education and training services for target children and improve the economic well-being of families and households through youth employment and livelihood opportunities so that children need not be engaged in work. Other activities include strengthening the capacity of government agencies to fight against child labor; raising awareness about child labor in the general public; and fostering sustainability of project efforts through capacity building and technical support. These action components of RCLES may be described as awareness raising and social protection; education; livelihoods and youth employment; and strengthening institutional capacity and policies, and are listed as such in the budget under “activities.”

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## II. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1. Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the RCLES project achieved its outcomes and the sustainability of those outcomes. The evaluation also examined which factors proved critical in helping or hindering results and potential sustainability. Finally, the evaluation identified key lessons learned, good practices, and recommendations for future projects.

The evaluation aims at providing Office for Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT), the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's experience in implementation, its effects on project beneficiaries, and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will serve to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate. The evaluation questions appear in the Terms of Reference (TOR) in Annex A.

### 2.2. Methodology

The evaluation used primarily qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data were also obtained from project's database and reports and incorporated into the analysis. Data collection methods and stakeholder perspectives were triangulated, where possible, to increase the credibility and validity of the results. The interview process incorporated flexibility to allow for additional questions, ensuring that key information was obtained. A consistent protocol was followed during each interview.

**Evaluation Schedule.** The evaluation was conducted between March 13 and May 3, 2017. The evaluator reviewed project documents, developed data collection instruments, and prepared for the fieldwork during the week of March 24. Fieldwork was conducted in Burkina Faso from April 3 to 14. The fieldwork culminated with a presentation and discussion of the preliminary findings with key project stakeholders on April 13. The bulk of the data analysis and report writing occurred from April 17 to May 3. The complete schedule of evaluation activities appears in the TOR Annex A.

**Data Collection and Analysis.** The TOR contained a list of evaluation questions that served as the basis for the evaluation. The questions were used to develop guides and protocols for the key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and document reviews. The master key informant interview guide is listed in Annex B. The following methods were employed to gather primary and secondary data.

*Document Reviews.* The evaluator read a variety of project documents and other reference publications. These documents included the cooperative agreement, project document,

comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan, technical progress reports, work plans, baseline survey report, etc. Annex C shows the complete list of documents that were reviewed.

*Key Informant Interviews.* The evaluator conducted individual and group interviews with the U.S. Department of labor (USDOL) managers, project staff, partners, government officials, NGOs, beneficiaries; community Village saving Loan associations (VSLAs) groups; volunteers; etc. In total, the evaluator interviewed 319 persons; 23 through individual interviews and 296 through group interviews. A complete list of interviews appears in Annex D.

The document reviews and key informant interviews generated a substantial volume of raw qualitative data. The evaluator used qualitative data analysis methods, including matrix analysis, to categorize, triangulate, synthesize, and summarize the raw data captured from the interview notes. The results of the data analysis provided tangible blocks of information, which the evaluator used to write the evaluation report. The data analysis was consistent with the evaluation questions in the TOR.

**Sampling Methodology.** The evaluator used a purposeful, non-random sampling methodology to select the interviewees. Table 1 summarizes the populations interviewed, the interviewing methodology, the sample size, and characteristics of the sample.

**Table 1: Population, Methodology, Sample size, and Sample Characteristics**

Population	Method	Sample Size	Sample Characteristics
USDOL	Group interviews	2	Project managers and evaluation officer (1M/1F*)
US Embassy in Burkina Faso	Individual interview	2	Economic/Commercial Officer (and Assistant) (2M)
RCLES project	Group interviews	20	Project management; project specialists; regional project teams (14M/6F)
NGOs and Aid Agencies	Individual interviews	4	Terre des Hommes ; GIZ ; Educo (3M/1F)
Central government	Individual interviews	7	Ministry of Labor; Ministry of Youth; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Social Affairs (6M/1F)
Regional/District government	Individual interviews	8	Regional Department of Labor- Boucle du Mouhoun; Town hall of Bondokuy; Child Protection network /Tuy; Provincial Direction of Education at Tuy; Provincial Direction of Youth at Tuy; Provincial Direction of farming at Bouéré; Provincial Direction of Agriculture at Comoé. (8M)
Children/Youth	Focus group discussions	60 <sup>3</sup>	Primary School of Passakongo Lycée departmental of Bondokuy

<sup>3</sup> The size of the focus groups ranged from 5-12 persons that consisted of both males and females



Population	Method	Sample Size	Sample Characteristics
			Primary school at Bouere Skills training trainees (artisans and centres) Primary school of Nianigara (30M/30F)
VSLA	Focus group discussions	175 <sup>4</sup>	VSLA Members (175 F)
PTA, MTA, Teachers, Parents	Focus group discussions	40	Primary School of Passakongo Lycée departmental of Bondokuy Primary school at Bouere Primary school of Nianigara (25M/15 F)
Artisan instructors	Individual interviews	2	Motorcycle repair, hairdressing (M)
<b>Total Interviews</b>		<b>319</b>	90 M 229 F

\*M: Male / F: Female

**Limitations.** The scope of the evaluation specifies two weeks of fieldwork, which was not enough time to interview the range of stakeholders that are participating in the project. However, the evaluator believes that the sample accurately represents the views and experiences of the key stakeholders and project beneficiaries. Nevertheless, it is possible that selection bias may have been introduced and the beneficiaries that participated in the focus group discussions do not fully represent the views of all youth beneficiaries. Furthermore since this was a non-random, purposive sample, the findings cannot be generalized to the total population.

This was not a formal impact assessment. The findings for the evaluation were based on information collected from background documents and the key informant interviews. The accuracy of the evaluation findings are predicated on the integrity of information provided to the evaluator from these sources and the ability of the evaluator to triangulate this information.

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<sup>4</sup> 9 VSLA groups of circa 25 women.

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### III. FINDINGS

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The following findings are based on the review of key project documents and interviews conducted during the fieldwork phase of the evaluation. The findings provide a global view of the project's main achievements and challenges, and address the key questions listed in the TOR and are presented according to the major evaluation categories Effectiveness; Validity of the Theory of Change (ToC) and CMEP; Potential Impact; and Sustainability.

#### **3.1. Effectiveness**

This section analyses to what extent the project achieved its outcomes as stated in the results framework; as well as the external or internal factors contributed to achievements and what factors hindered achievement. The last part of the section analyzes the effectiveness the project's efforts to involve key stakeholders, including the Government of Burkina Faso; to what extent the project's partnerships at the local and national level contributed to the achievement of its outcomes. The analysis also assesses the success of the CLMS pilot, along with the prospects for sustainability and scaling up of the pilot.

#### **Project's Main Results and Challenges**

The TOR asks the evaluator to assess the extent to which the RCLES project achieved its outcomes. This section/chapter intends to provide the readers with a global view of the project's main achievements and challenges at the national and regional/local levels.

#### **Challenges to Project Implementation**

The implementation of project activities was significantly influenced by the political unrest the country experienced during 2014-15. After a first coup d'état in 2014, elections were convened at the end of 2015 and the project resumed activities. However, shortly afterwards there was a second (attempted) coup d'état that forced the project to suspend activities.

Once the political situation stabilized, RCLES resumed implementation in early 2016. Although USDOL approved no-cost extension until July 2017, the actual implementation schedule was considerably reduced. Also, differences on child protection approaches, administrative procedures, division of activities, salaries, etc. caused disagreement between Terre des Hommes (TdH) and Counterpart International (CI), which resulted in TdH withdrawing from RCLES early on in the project.

## Project's Main Results

### **I.O.1: Target populations' attitudes changed to reflect a negative view of child labor/hazardous child labor and a positive view of education**

Through the awareness raising activities, the project helped improve knowledge and ownership of child labor and the importance of education, building widespread agreement among families, teachers and communities on the need to prevent and eliminate child labor from cotton and mining communities.

#### **Awareness raising on child labor and education**

The RCLES Project, in partnership with local Community Based Organizations (CBOs), conducted numerous awareness raising activities among cotton farmers and gold miners and largely surpassed the established targets in terms of number of persons reached by such campaigns. In all, 119,061 were reached by the project's awareness-raising activities.

These activities consisted of radio broadcasting campaigns, group discussions, film projections and drama presentations conducted by three local CBOs. Table 2 below shows the indicators, targets and end of project results related to awareness raising on child labor and education.

**Table 2: Awareness raising indicators**

Indicators	Target	Achievement
1.1.a # of <b>artisanal gold miners</b> exposed to awareness raising campaigns on the dangers, impact, and potential solutions to child labor/HCL and the advantages of education who demonstrate an understanding of at least 3 campaign messages	7,500	<b>51,586</b>
1.1.b # of <b>cotton producers</b> exposed to awareness raising campaigns on the dangers, impact, and potential solutions to child labor/HCL and the advantages of education who demonstrate an understanding of at least 3 campaign messages	33,500	<b>67,475</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,000</b>	<b>119,061</b>

Source: project performance data

Although the project did not conduct research to *measure the effects* of these campaigns, from the interviews and conversations conducted by the evaluator during the field visits, families and community members, children, teachers, village chiefs, and authorities demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the dangers, impact, and potential solutions to child labor and the advantages of education. During field-work, families and children told the evaluator they are committed to end child labor and keep children in school, although, in some cases, they still face some challenges to meet this goal; namely, poverty and cultural factors (please refer to section 3.3.)

### **I.O.2: Use of social protection services by target households has increased**

The mobilization and training for Social Protection Community Facilitators (SPCF) volunteers, along with the formation/reinforcement of the *Reseaux de Protection de l'Enfance* (RPE, Child Protection Networks) in the regions targeted by the project contributed to building a culture of collective action against child labor by increasing cooperation among different actors. There is evidence that this has led to an increased use of social protection services by target households.

However, and despite the volunteers' commitment, without RCLES support, transportation expenses may result in some volunteers being unable to continue their support. Also, the continuity of the Child Protection Networks (CPNs) work might be less intense once RCLES withdraws.

### **Capacity building: Teachers and members of Parents' Associations; Social Protection Community Facilitators (SPCF) and Community-based Organization (CBO) animators**

The RCLES project, in partnership with the Regional Department of Education Ministry (DRENA) and the Provincial Department of Education Ministry (DPENA), conducted training sessions in each of the regions targeted by the project (Boucle du Mouhoun, Cascades and Hauts Bassins). Teachers and members of Parents Associations (551 persons) were trained on the dangers, risks, and impacts of child labor as well as on psychosocial support to victims of child labor.

According to evaluations conducted by the project after the training sessions, 84% of participants showed a high level of understanding of the training sessions' contents and key messages. During the fieldwork, the evaluator had the opportunity to interview some of the trainees. The evaluator noted that they retained a reasonable amount of knowledge on the dangers, risks, impacts and psychosocial support to victims of child labor.

However, as expressed in the Technical Progress Reports (TPRs), and also as noted by some informants, due to budget constraints, the duration of the trainings was reduced to 1 day (instead of 2 days). This prevented a more thorough explanation and discussion of the topics covered by the training sessions.

Also, Social Protection Community Facilitators (SPCF) volunteers were trained by the project to promote their participation in community outreach activities on social protection and, also, to reinforce their understanding of the provision of social protection services to children. SPCF volunteers are resource persons from the RCLES beneficiary communities. The trainings were conducted in the three regions covered by the project.

The project conducted pre and post-testing among participants to evaluate their knowledge of concepts before and after the trainings. According to the project's TPRs, 21% of participants scored 70% or higher on the pre-test (before); and 72.5% of the participants scored 70% or higher on the post-test (after). The training sessions' evaluations and the interviews conducted by the evaluator confirm that the volunteers trained by the project have a better understanding of the

provisions of social protection services to children. According to project performance data, as a result of these activities, 3,579 households in the three regions received SPCFs services, and, in general, volunteers regularly provided monthly reports on their activities.

The evaluator found the participation of these volunteers in the project's activities commendable. They are community members (usually in precarious situations) that invest a good deal of their time helping their neighbors, often sacrificing their own obligations and work. The project provides a small stipend to pay for their transportation (a volunteer often covers several villages in one *commune*). While the volunteers have shown commitment during the project, without RCLES support, transportation expenses may result in some volunteers being unable to continue their support.

### **Capacity building of Child Protection Networks**

The Child Protection Networks -CPN- (*Réseaux de Protection de l'Enfance*) consist of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), CBOs, government agencies working on child protection, and traditional and religious leaders. The CPNs aim to coordinate the different participants' efforts and activities and promote synergies to better address child protection issues including child labor, trafficking, early marriages, and early pregnancies.

The RCLES project contributed to setting up 3 CPNs in the Hauts Bassins, Boucle du Mouhoun and Cascades regions. The network members have received training on child protection systems, networking approach, and case management. Also, the project provided support to the CPNs for developing their work-plans on child labor.

Based on interviews with different stakeholders, the evaluator understood that, to some extent and through the above mentioned interventions; the RCLES project facilitated families' improved access to existing social services. The work of the SPCF facilitated raising awareness among families. The CPNs are responsible for examining the different situations in an all-encompassing way and proposing a course of action for the families, acting also as referral focal points.

However, the different social services are usually based in the provinces' capitals, often far away from the target communities, making it difficult for project beneficiaries to access them. A very distinctive feature of the RCLES project is that the CPNs have *now* begun making home visits to beneficiaries. For example, the Municipal Social Services and other institutions participating in the CPNs have started visiting some households, providing support and/or referring certain cases to the education and health systems as needed. The sustainability of this component will depend on the continuity of the CPNs' work, which might be less intense when the RCLES project ends.

### **Accountability mechanism for volunteers is in place**

RCLES volunteers conducted home visits, community mobilization and awareness raising of parents and children on the issues related to child labor and the benefits of education. A total of

3,579 households in the three targeted regions received SPCFs services. In general, volunteers provided monthly reports to project staff and managers.

***1.O.3: Target children and youth have increased participation in education***

Despite the delays in the project start-up, RCLES was effective in increasing targeted children and youth in education by improving school infrastructures and providing teaching and learning materials as well as economic support to beneficiaries. The economic support consisted of scholarships, school kits, Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) and vocational training centres' fees; and training for parents, school associations and schoolteachers. Also, the project conducted awareness raising campaigns and offered livelihood services to families. As a result of these activities, 8,559 children in or at risk of entering into child labour (4,073 girls and 4,486 boys) were provided with education or vocational services.

However, cultural and poverty/economic factors (please refer to section 3.3.) still have a negative influence in households sending their children to school. Furthermore, the remoteness of the communities, frequently situated far away from schools, and/or the persistent lack of quality education, adds to making education less attractive than work.

***Increased participation in education of children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor***

Due to the aforementioned circumstances, the project's start-up was delayed. Thus, although the level of achievement is 14.41% below the initial target, the evaluation considers that the project attained significant results in increasing access to relevant education for children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor; through the provision of educational/vocational training services.

In all, and throughout the three regions in which the Project intervened, 8,559 children (4,073 girls and 4,486 boys) were provided with education or vocational services. Table 3 below, reflects indicator E1 targets and achievements.

**Table 3: E1: Number of children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor provided education or vocational services (to date)**

	TARGET	CHILDREN PROVIDED WITH SERVICES			PERCENT ACHIEVEMENT
		Girls	Boys	Total Children	
<b>Disaggregation (CL/CAHR)</b>	Total # of Children				
Children Engaged in Child Labor (CL)	4,000	1,938	2,192	<b>4,130</b>	<b>103.25%</b>
Children at High-Risk of Entering Child Labor (CAHR)	6,000	2,135	2,294	<b>4,429</b>	<b>73.82%</b>

	TARGET	CHILDREN PROVIDED WITH SERVICES			PERCENT ACHIEVEMENT
<b>TOTAL</b>	10,000	4,073	4,486	<b>8,559</b>	<b>85.59%</b>

Source: project performance data

The project aimed to increase the participation of children and youth in: a) formal education; b) non-formal education; and c) vocational skills training. In order to do so, the project adopted a threefold approach consisting of: 1) withdrawing financial barriers to school participation; 2) improving school infrastructure; and 3) increasing school officials', parents' and stakeholders' knowledge of the dangers of child labor and hazardous child labor and ways in which to access protective social services.

### Formal Education

As shown in Table 4 (E2 Indicator) a total of 8,048 children (3,847 girls and 4,201 boys) were enrolled in formal education services.

**Table 4: E2: Number of children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor enrolled in formal education services (to date)**

Target	Girls	Boys	Achievement
<b>7,125</b>	3,847	4,201	<b>8,048</b>

Source: project performance data

Among these, 2,574 were working children and 5,474 were at risk children. At the end of the project, 6,941 were attending school on a regular basis. According to the data gathered during the interviews with children, teachers and parents these children are no longer working. However, the evaluator was unable to verify that these children are no longer working based on the qualitative data ascertained from the sample interviewed.

It is also worth mentioning that the influx of children to schools resulted in crowded classrooms. Furthermore, children enrolled at a late age (although having received remedial courses) were not at their fellow students' level and often repeated a grade, which is highly demotivating.

Although some beneficiaries are no longer in the education system because they finished their respective cycles, the rate of school dropouts after enrollment still constitutes a challenge. Testimonies gathered during the fieldwork phase of the evaluation showed that most dropouts happened when going from primary to secondary education. This is because there are fewer secondary schools in rural areas, secondary education is less appealing to students and families, its costs are higher, and the prospects of continuing in education (tertiary) are lower. Early marriages (girls) and pregnancy is also a serious issue affecting school continuity. The transitory

nature of gold mining also affects enrollment. It is common for gold mining workers' families to move out of the project target regions to find new sites in which to work. This implies the need to transfer children from one school to another, which seldom happens.

To mitigate school dropouts and to reintegrate the dropouts, the project trained volunteers in attendance management. After this training, the project initiated home visits to discuss and negotiate the return of dropouts to school or learning centers. However, the impact of these measures is still unclear. RCLES intervened in 280 schools, which makes it difficult to follow-up every individual situation.

### **Non-Formal Education**

As illustrated in Table 5 (Indicator E3) 38 children were provided with non-formal education services consisting of literacy courses at vocational training centers.

The results obtained are largely below the target established by the project. As explained by the project's staff, non-formal education was aimed at beneficiaries who were not literate in order to teach them to read and speak French. However, when the project started its activities it was found that most of the beneficiaries were literate and did not need non-formal education.

**Table 5: E3: Number of children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor enrolled in non-formal education services (to date)**

Target	Girls	Boys	Achievement
2,125	15	23	38

Source: project performance data

All boys and girls enrolled in non-formal education completed the courses. After completion, they were engaged in vocational training provided by the Ministry of Education *Centres d'Education de Base Non Formelle* (CEBNFs).

### **Vocational Services**

A total of 476 youth (ages 15-17) were provided with vocational services. They were also provided with training kits that contained the necessary supplies for their apprenticeships/training. The following table shows the number of children enrolled in vocational services through the RCLES Project.



**Table 6: E4: Number of children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor enrolled in vocational services (to date)**

Target	Girls	Boys	Achievement
750	180	291	471

Source: project performance data

A noteworthy feature of the project is that, on average, 86% of youth enrolled, completed the training. Previous evaluation experiences in similar contexts and/or projects show that an 86% completion percentage is relatively high.<sup>5</sup>

While the evaluation was being conducted the project was in the process of acquiring “instalment kits” to help the trainees set up their own micro-business.

The evaluation found that it was possible to provide skills training in remote rural areas, through apprenticeships with local craftsmen or training at rural agricultural centers, something that is not always easy. Key project stakeholders stated that the project was able to provide training, which is relevant to the needs of child laborers and out-of-school children.

There is widespread agreement among informants that training older children in useful skills for employment is essential to combat child labor in rural areas. Through interviews, the trainees themselves declared their satisfaction with the training services provided and expressed a high level of confidence on their capacity to set up a business or find employment as a result of the training received.

### **Economic support to beneficiaries**

As shown in the table below, the project provided economic support and teaching and learning materials to beneficiaries to facilitate their access to education. A total of 8,559 children benefited from some kind of support: scholarships, school kits, PTA and vocational training centers’ fees.

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<sup>5</sup> Skills training projects in Togo and Guinea Konakry

**Table 7: Economic support to beneficiaries Indicators**

Indicator	Target	Achievement
3.1. Number of selected children who received scholarships and school kits (including copy books, pencils, pens, rulers, etc) from the project	1,700*	<b>8,559</b>

Source: project performance data

\*100% of children received scholarships and/or kits

By law, education is compulsory and free until the age of 16. However, school materials and PTA costs were identified by the project as barriers preventing access to education for working/disadvantaged children. Consequently, the project's strategy was to provide the beneficiary children with school kits along with the required PTA fees.

Regardless of the awareness raising and livelihood activities, it remains uncertain whether at the end of the project (when economic support will no longer be available), students will continue to enroll and attend school in the same way they did during the project.

### **Infrastructure Improvements**

The project contributed to improving learning in 58 (over an initial target of 50) formal and non-formal schools and vocational training centers in project zones through financial assistance for building rehabilitation and renovations. The following table shows the indicator, target and end of project results, regarding infrastructure improvements.

**Table 8: Infrastructure improvement indicators**

Indicator	Target	Achievement
3.2. Percent of target schools where physical infrastructure (classrooms, latrines, etc.) has been repaired or upgraded	24%	116%

Source: project performance data

In spite of this achievement, the overwhelming needs, the number of targeted schools and the resources available allowed for only minor (although significant, as perceived by the schools) improvements: new blackboards; repairs in leaking ceilings; retrofitting class floors; etc. Considerable investment and interventions would be needed to have a significant impact on improving the learning environment such as new classrooms (the evaluator witnessed classrooms seating up to **160** pupils); access to electricity and safe water; and bathrooms (for both boys and girls); school canteens.

### **Training of Parents, School Associations and Schoolteachers**

As detailed earlier, parents, school associations and teachers were trained on the dangers, impact, and potential solutions to child labor, how to provide psychosocial support to victims, and how to use the CLMS. The following table shows the results achieved by the project.

**Table 9: Training of parents, school associations and schoolteacher indicators**

Indicators	Target	Achievement
3.3.Number of PTAs, MTAs, and education stakeholders trained by the project	250	551

Source: project performance data

Qualitative data from testimonies gathered by the evaluator from parents and children shows that, as a result of the project's interventions, they now find the school/education more attractive, which increases the motivation for both families and children to attend and remain in school. In spite of the project's remarkable efforts and results attained, there is a need to increase the quality of education by continuing to improve and increase educational infrastructure and equipment, but also by reinforcing teachers' skills, especially in managing large classrooms; and by improving and extending remedial courses to ensure that children are ready to follow the grade according to his/her age. Also, supplementary support is required to insure that children remain in school until completion, and, also, to further increase enrolment among other children at risk/work.

**I.O.4: The incomes and assets of target households and youth have increased**

The RCLES project provided substantial support to targeted households and youth to improve income and assets with different livelihoods interventions, largely exceeding the initial target, as illustrated in the following table (L1 indicator).

**Table 10: L1: Number of households receiving livelihood services**

	Target Number of Households Receiving Services	Actual Number of Households Receiving Services
<b>TOTAL PROJECT</b>	1,000	<b>1,639</b>

Source: project performance data

In this way, as shown in the table above, **1,639 households (out of a target of 1,000) received support in different areas** including employment services and Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). The reason behind such a degree of achievement is the success of the VSLAs in terms of number of groups constituted, women joining them, and the "replicatrices" ability to assist other women's groups form VSLAs.

As detailed in section 3.4, 47.60% of target households increased their incomes and 63.35% of households had at least one member who undertakes an income generating activity.

### **Employment services**

The project provided 352 adults and 220 youth with employment services, as shown in the table below (L2 indicator).

**Table 11: Number of adults provided with employment services (to date)**

Target	Female	Male	Achievement
750	96	256	<b>352</b>

Source: project performance data

In association with the Ministry of Agriculture's rural extension services, the project provided support in the form of the *Farming as a Business* (FAAB) component. Producers were also trained in increasing agricultural production and developing business plans to increase their revenues. RCLES collaborated by distributing enhanced seeds and by intermediating between producers and micro-credit institutions, so the producers are able to implement their business plans. The results achieved are well below the established target. The evaluator believes that the project was overly ambitious with its target.

In addition, 220 youth of legal working age, between 16–17 years, engaged in child labor or at risk of being engaged were trained in occupational safety and health (OSH) according to ILO standards, related to the area in which they work (cotton farming or gold mining).

**Table 12: L3: Number of children provided with employment services (to date)**

Target	Girls	Boys	Achievement
750	90	130	<b>220</b>

Source: project performance data

Finally, upon completion of their vocational training and in collaboration with the *Direction General de la Jeunesse* (MOL), 250 youth were trained in micro-enterprise and credit management. This group is also meant to receive installation kits to support them in starting their own businesses (this is an on-going activity). The installation kits will consist of small tools according to the type of business they will create.

### **Economic strengthening services**

As shown in Table 13 below, a total of 1,469 individuals from 1,199 households were provided with economic strengthening services, through Farmer Field Schools (FFS or *Champs-école* in French) and VSLA.

**Table 13: L4: Number of individuals provided with economic strengthening services**

Target	Female	Male	Achievement
2,500	950	519	1,469

Source: project performance data

### **Farmer Field Schools (FFS)**

The project, in partnership with the extension services of the Provincial Direction of Agriculture (DPSA), trained beneficiaries through FFS in good agricultural practices and how to improve farming and post-harvest techniques. In all, 258 persons from 258 households participated in several learning sessions on improving agricultural productivity in the field.

Interviews conducted by the evaluator confirmed the pertinence of the trainings and showed that trainees acquired knowledge that allows for better agricultural practices. According to an evaluation conducted by the *Direction Provinciale de l'Agriculture*<sup>6</sup> in Banfora (Cascades Region), trainees improved their crop production by 100%.

### **Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA)**

The project helped establish the VSLAs and build the capacity and mentor VSLA members. In total, 46 groups were created in 32 villages by 941 women beneficiaries of the project, grouped within 941 households. The VSLA groups began granting small loans to their members and the project provided training in business, credit and income generating activity training. As a result, VSLA members established micro-enterprises in various areas such as soap making, food processing, fruits, and vegetable drying.

The total number of individuals reached by both activities is below the established target. On one hand, interviews pointed out that the target set at the project's design stage was too ambitious. On the other hand, FFS can only be developed during the rainy season, which limits the time frame and hence the potential to reach more beneficiaries.

Regarding the VSLA, RCLES trained "Replicatives". These are women participating in VSLA groups that can train and encourage other women forming new savings and loan associations, without further RCLES support. Both the project team and the women are confident that this will contribute to increasing the number of VSLA groups.

Livelihood beneficiaries (VSLA, FAAB, FFS, Fair-trade) showed a great interest in these activities and created momentum in the communities. In turn, through these activities RCLES

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<sup>6</sup> Rapport Final d'exécution des activités de l'accord de partenariat portant mise en place et conduite de quatre champs écoles des producteurs dans la province de Comoe. Campagne agricole 2014-2015. Direction Provinciale de l'Agriculture

had a not only contributed to fight poverty, but also to positively influence attitudes and behaviors towards child labor.

The importance of the livelihood component is crucial to improve household income in a sustainable way and thus have a real impact on child labor. The VSLA, FAAB, Fair-trade and FFS are examples of good practices that should be reinforced and scaled-up. However, their impact in terms of increased revenues and assets is going to take some time, well after the project life.

#### ***1.O.5: Public sector, cotton and gold producers and community structures address child labor***

RCLES provided assistance to the Direction de la Lute Contre le Travail des Enfants (DLTE-MOL) and the Ministries of Social Affairs, Education and Youth in the planning and operating of a pilot CLMS in the Boucle du Mouhoun region. The CLMS background document, work plan, procedures and tools and were developed and endorsed in 2015. Likewise, RCLES instructed volunteers and community and school members on CLMS processes, instruments, and operation.

According to the interviews with the MOL central, regional and local representatives and CLMS volunteers, activities were carried out without serious difficulties and data collection and transmission from the villages to the MOL (through the local, provincial and regional administration) is ongoing. Also, a MOL/DLTE representative confirmed that a database at central level is in the process of being developed.

Furthermore, a National Steering Committee (NSC) was established to guide the CLMS implementation. The RCLES project is a member of the NSC together with the Ministries of Labor, Social Affairs, and Education; NGOs; the Cotton Producers Union and the Traditional Gold Miners' Union.

As illustrated in Table 14, 6 villages have an operating CLMS and 30 individuals were trained on how to implement and use the CLMS.

**Table 14: CLMS indicators**

Indicators	Target	Achievement
5.1. Number of villages who have an operating CLMS at local level	32	6
5.1. Number of individuals trained on how to implement and use the CLMS	360	30

Source: project performance data

The results achieved are below the expected targets in terms of number of villages with an operating CLMS. However, this is explained by the political instability the country suffered during 2014-15 and the following political transition, as this component relies heavily on government structures.

***Were the project's efforts to involve key stakeholders, including the Government of Burkina Faso, successful? Have the project's partnerships at the local and national level contributed to the achievement of its outcomes?***

The project was successful in establishing solid relationships with a wide range of government agencies, both at the central, regional and provincial level: Ministry of Labor (MOL), Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth, M. of Agriculture, and Ministry of Mines. It is worth mentioning that all of these institutions participate in the project's steering committee. Likewise, the project engaged with national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by participating and supporting the *Groupe de Travail pour la Protection de l'Enfance* –GTPE- (central level) and the *Reseaux de Protection de l'Enfance*-RPE- (regional level). At the decentralized level, the project was able to generate a solid relationship with the *Mairies* (City councils) and *Gouvernorats* (regional governments).

The evaluation found that it is essential to ensure the support and participation of central and decentralized government agencies and representatives of relevant institutions in project activities. This significantly increases the project's ability to reach its goals. However, the evaluator believes that it would also have been useful to target trade unions and the industry to participate in the fight against child labor and to improve working conditions of legal age youth working in the plantations and mines.

The project's partnerships at the local and national level contributed to building a culture of collective action against child labor by increasing cooperation among different actors. There is evidence that this has led to the formation/reinforcement of the *Reseaux de Protection de l'Enfance* (Child Protection Networks) in the regions targeted by the project.

Furthermore, these structures and the recently created the CLMS are opening the way for monitoring and identifying children in labor, and have helped in having some of them referred to schools/social services. More specifically, the *Mairies*, *Gouvernorats* and the provincial and regional departments of the MOL play a key role in deploying and implementing the CLMS. Furthermore, RCLES provided support to labor ministry to review, update and validate the list of Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL).

Other examples of how the project's partnerships at the local and national level contributed to the achievement of its outcomes include local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) conducting awareness raising campaigns and the Regional Department of Education Ministry (DRENA) and Provincial Department of Education Ministry (DPENA) partnering with RCLES in order to conduct training sessions in each of the regions targeted by the project to teachers and members of Parents Associations.

Also, the Ministry of Education's Centres d'Education de Base Non Formelle (CEBNFs) provided non-formal education courses and vocational training and the Direction General de la Jeunesse provided training in micro-enterprise and credit management to 250 youth upon completion of their vocational training.

Likewise, the Ministry of Agriculture's rural extension services provided support to the project in developing the Farming as a Business (FAAB) and the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) components.

***Assess the success of the Child Labor Monitoring System pilot. What are the prospects for sustainability and scaling up of the pilot?***

In Burkina Faso, the labor ministry, with the support of the RCLES project started the implementation of CLMS pilot phase in 6 villages from 2 provinces of the Boucle du Mouhoun region. Also, a National Steering Committee (NSC) is in place to pilot the implementation of the CLMS. The NSC is formed by representatives from the Ministries of Labor, Social Affairs, and Education; the Cotton Producers Union and the Traditional Gold Miners' Union; and several NGOs, including Counterpart's RCLES project director. The first challenge for the CLMS once RCLES ends is to insure its continuation. There is indeed a great degree of ownership across all levels (Communities/*Mairies*/Provinces/Regions/Central level) and most of the CLMS actors are committed to continue with its implementation.

At regional, provincial, and central levels, public servants working for the labor ministry manage the CLMS. CLMS management is included in their job descriptions and their salaries are covered by the labor ministry. However, at community level, CLMS volunteers depend upon the project's allowances to conduct their work, which could greatly affect their availability/willingness to continue their collaboration.

On the technical side, as many informants pointed out, in the short term, and at all levels (regions/provinces/communities), further technical and financial support will continue to be necessary after the completion of the RCLES project to reinforce the prospects for sustainability of the CLMS. Various stakeholders manifested that since the DLTE is aware of these challenges, it is currently opening dialogue channels with other donors in order to consolidate (and eventually, scale-up) the pilot CLMS. However, it is still unclear if these dialogues have been effective.

During the fieldwork phase the MOL/DLTE, representatives interviewed by the evaluator communicated their wish to evaluate and scale-up the CLMS. The DLTE emphasized the need of on-going support to evaluate the pilot phase to determine whether the CLMS should be replicated. There is potential to build upon the RCLES achievements by supporting the evaluation of the pilot CLMS and on the basis of its results, further explore the possibility of scaling-up the CLMS.

The following sections address the evaluation questions included in the Terms of Reference (TOR). In order to facilitate easy reading and comprehension, the evaluator grouped the evaluation questions according to the following categories: *Validity of the ToC and CMEP*; *Potential Impact*; and *Sustainability*. The findings are based on the review of key project documents and reports, as well as interviews conducted during the fieldwork phase.



### 3.2. Validity of the ToC and CMEP

This section addresses accuracy of the project's theory of change (ToC) as the project is coming to an end and also examines the extent to which the CMEP provided a useful framework for project monitoring and management; and also, the reliability of data reported under the CMEP indicators.

#### **Do the project's theory of change and overall design prove to be accurate as the project is coming to an end?**

According to the ILO, the percentage of child workers in Burkina Faso is one of the highest amidst sub-Saharan countries; and 42.1% of children between ages 5-14 years (2.1 million) are economically active.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, based on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) data, 48% of primary school aged children are not enrolled (primary net enrollment rate: 66%; primary completion rate: 58%).<sup>8</sup>

The regions targeted by the project - Boucle de Mouhoun, Cascades and Hauts-Bassins - are among the most affected by child labor. These three regions host 23.8% of children 5-17 years without access to education and/or to youth employment<sup>9</sup>.

According to the problem analysis included in the project's CMEP, Burkina Faso faces limitations related to a) limited capacities of labor inspection services in the country, b) absence of effective enforcement and c) difficulty of applying existing laws. Also, the key drivers of child labor are lack of awareness with regards to the dangers, risks and potential solutions to the problem; limited institutional capacity of government agencies; disincentives to education; and severe rural poverty. In addition to the above factors, at the national level, the lack of awareness regarding prevailing national laws, regulations, policies, and ratified international conventions are major obstacles.

Interviews and secondary data gathered by the evaluator confirm the validity of the CMEP's problem analysis. The evaluation also found that the project's ToC is all-encompassing and the strategy and intervention methodologies chosen were, in general, appropriate for correctly addressing the causal factors behind child labor in the areas and sectors targeted by the project. Furthermore, there is a strong causal argument that connects the projects main elements: IOs, (outcomes), outputs and activities.

The project followed a sound intervention strategy as it worked towards building stronger links between child labor elimination interventions and education. This was done through a multi-pronged approach to combat child labor that included:

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<sup>7</sup> The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalization in the ECOWAS region. ILO-UCW

<sup>8</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2010-2012

<sup>9</sup> RCLES CMEP based on Burkina Faso's National Survey on Child Labor

Interventions aimed at raising awareness of child labor and education among households, community structures and leaders, as well as district and local government representatives. Such interventions reached thousands of households, countless community members, and numerous district and local government representatives.

Addressing education-based child labor drivers, by training teachers and parent association members to enhance their capacity to address child labor; providing economic support to children/families to overcome education costs; and offering support to improve schools' infrastructure.

Improving household incomes. The project economically supported families and individuals, through VSLAs, income generating activities and/or employment services.

Capacity building: The project worked with teachers and members of Parents Associations; SPCF; CBOs and child protection networks in order to reinforce their ability to face child labor in the three project targeted regions. Additionally, the project supported the design and implementation of a pilot CLMS.

***Retrospectively, could the project have benefitted from a more focused approach, given the resources it had?***

With the benefit of hindsight, the evaluation estimates that, due especially to the delays in the project's start-up and the resources available; RCLES could have been more effective by focusing its interventions in fewer regions, provinces, and communities (and schools). The intervention sites are large and far away from the regional/provincial capitals. This hindered project management and made monitoring difficult, as the project's focal points are based in the provincial and national capitals, and despite their best efforts, they cannot be present in all the communities as often as needed and with the desired intensity.

Project staff opined that the large geographical area to be covered and the available human and financial resources affected quality, especially in education services. They also noted that the project emphasized quantity over quality in order to reach the project's targets. As they explained, "*there were pre-defined targets that we had to reach; often very ambitious in relation to the socio-political context*".

***Did the CMEP provide a useful framework for project monitoring and management?***

A noteworthy characteristic of USDOL's child labor projects is that grantees are required to develop a CMEP within the first nine months of receiving the award. The CMEP's purpose is to support the design of a project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system.

There is agreement on the fact that the CMEP facilitated the identification of the RCLES' ToC, which expresses the logical sequence of events through which the envisaged changes are expected to take place, based on a problem-objectives analysis. The project's ToC is reflected in the results framework (RF), which articulates the underlying path towards change and contains

the project's objectives, outputs and indicators. The RF is a key instrument for M&E purposes, as it constitutes a reference or model against which the monitoring and evaluation exercises are conducted.

The CMEP contains the performance monitoring plan (PMP), which identifies indicators (for the project's progress towards its intended results), definitions of terms, data sources, frequency of data collection and responsible parties, and data use for management purposes. CMEP also includes a data collection table (DCT) that lists the entire project data collection instruments (DCIs) with a technical description of each.

Together, both project staff and the evaluator agreed that these tools were instrumental for project monitoring and management as they helped to facilitate the collection and analysis of performance data and indicators; gathering of comparable data over time and across project sites; measuring progress towards expected results during implementation; and monitoring and analysis of project progress along with the effect of project interventions.

However, as project staff explained to the evaluator, the RCLES project was required to draft multiple revisions of the CMEP before it met USDOL minimum requirements, which represented a huge amount of time and effort. Also, the CMEP is regarded by project staff to be a highly complicated tool that needs highly trained staff to correctly manage it. This applies not only to the M&E Officer, but also the Project Manager and other project specialists and regional focal points involved in project monitoring. USDOL focused on increased capacity of the project to develop, implement, and use the CMEP.

***How reliable is the data reported under the CMEP indicators? Please choose a sample of indicators and look into how the project collected/calculated/reported the data to DOL?***

The RCLES data collection and reporting process consists of the SPCFs regularly (monthly) conducting visits to households to collect data on beneficiaries and their families using detailed data collection-forms. The SPCFs deliver their reports to the project's *regional M&E assistant*, who revises and validates the report and, in turn, reports to the *Head of Protection*. The Head of Protection checks, validates and delivers the report to the *M&E Officer* who is responsible for processing and analyzing the data, checks the project's progress against targets and indicators, provides information to the *Project Manager* and essential input for producing Technical Progress Reports (TPRs). Additionally, the project manager, the M&E Officer and the project specialists conduct regular monitoring visits to project intervention sites.

The evaluation found that the above described data collection process and reporting is thorough and adequate. Furthermore, discussions with project staff and SPCFs showed that they take their responsibilities seriously. However, project staff recognized that, at its inception, the data collection process experienced some challenges and the quality of the data collected regarding children's attendance experienced some difficulties as teachers did not correctly fill out the forms and/or submitted these forms late.

Regardless of these challenges, from interviews with project staff and document review, the evaluation found that project management took adequate and corrective actions<sup>10</sup> to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of data. The evaluation concludes that, overall, data reported under the CMEP indicators are generally accurate and reliable.

As requested in the TOR, the evaluator chose a sample of indicators (one per IO) and looked into how the project collected/calculated/reported the data to the Department of Labor (DOL) and also discussed it with all project staff in Counterpart's HQ in Burkina Faso. The results are reflected in the table below:

**Table 15: Data collection, reporting and reliability**

Objectives/Outputs/Indicators	Data collection and reporting	Reliability of data* (High, Medium, Low)
<b>IO1: Target populations' attitudes changed to reflect a negative view of child labor/HCL and a positive view of education</b>		
<b>IO1.1: Target populations have a better understanding of the dangers, impact, and potential solutions to child labor/HCL and the advantages of education</b>		
1.1. Number of individuals exposed to awareness raising campaigns about the dangers, impact, and potential solutions to child labor/HCL and the advantages of education	Data is based on CBOs conducting awareness raising campaigns. These reports are based on a pre-defined format provided by the project.	<p><b>Medium</b> For the media campaigns</p> <p><b>High</b> For focused interventions with project participants</p>
<b>IO2: Use of social protection services by target households has increased</b>		
<b>IO 2.3: The volunteers trained in social protection for children provide social protection services to children in project zones</b>		
2.3. Number of households that receive social protection services provided by SPCFs	Data is based on the SPCFs and validated at regional level and Counterpart's BF HQ	<b>High</b>
<b>IO3: Target children and youth have increased participation in education</b>		
E1: Number of children engaged in or at risk of entering child labor provided with education or vocational services	<p>The project triangulated several sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reports on school kits distribution.</li> <li>- Reports on economic support to children</li> <li>- Reports on non-formal education</li> </ul>	<b>High</b>
<b>IO4: The incomes and assets of target households and youth have increased</b>		

<sup>10</sup> Detailed in the RCLES responses to USDOL Comments

4. Percent of target HH with an increase in assets	No baseline, thus, no reference data to compare available.	<b>Medium**</b> In 2015 the project conducted a study based on a sample of 197 households that showed that 37.70% of households increased their incomes. In January 2016 the project conducted census of all HHs and got a value of 46.60% for this indicator.
<b>IO 4.2: Target households provided with livelihood services engaged in livelihood activities</b>		
L1: Number of households receiving livelihood services	Reports on VSLA, FFS, FAB and skill trainings by government agencies and consultants.	<b>High</b>
<b>IO 5.1: Child Labor Monitoring System in cotton sector set up and functional at the regional and national levels</b>		
5.1. Number of individuals trained on how to implement and use the CLMS	Report by the MOL Regional Direction	<b>High</b>
<b>IO 5.2 Cotton producers and gold miners provided with fair trade-related knowledge to address Child Labor/ HCL</b>		
5.2. Number of cotton producers trained on fair-trade and certification procedures	Report by consultant and UNPCB	<b>High</b>
<b>*Reliability of data:</b>  <b>High:</b> the data collection and reporting process is conducted by project staff/government agencies, and validated by the project's responsible officers.  <b>Medium:</b> The data collection and reporting is conducted by a third party and validated by the projects responsible officers <b>**No base-line data available, sampling applied.</b>  <b>Low:</b> The data collection and reporting is conducted by a third party and it's not validated by the project's responsible officers.		

### 3.3. Potential impact

This section assesses the impact of VSLAs on households' economic situation and child labor prevalence; the project's contribution to a decrease in child labor in the implementation areas; includes an analysis of the project-reported results for the POC indicators and comments on the reliability of the data; and, analyses whether beneficiary family household assets increased.

***Assess the impact of VSLAs on households' economic situation and child labor prevalence within VSLA participant households. What is the likelihood of their continued existence after the project ends?***

The evaluator, based on primary and secondary data, considers that all the projects' achievements combined, not only the VSLAs, contributed to preventing and reducing child labor in the project's beneficiary households. Increased access to educational services and improved school retention and attendance represent a significant milestone.

The livelihood component of the project (VSLA, FFS, FAAB) generated a significant impetus in the communities and, as witnessed by the evaluator, beneficiaries demonstrated convincing signs of dedication and interest with regard to livelihood services. In turn, these provided weight for the project to improve households' attitudes and behaviors regarding school attendance.

In particular, as evidenced from the interviews conducted during fieldwork, the FFS, FAAB, and in particular, the VSLAs seem to hold promising prospects in increasing beneficiary households' income, which could eventually have an impact in improving school enrollment, attendance and thus contribute to decreasing the prevalence of child labor. VSLA groups and FFS/FAAB trainees are now being supported by RCLES to have access to financial services by facilitating contact with the *Caisse Populaire d'Epargne*, a micro-financial institution with strong presence in rural Burkina Faso. Access to financial capital and institutions (savings and credit) could be a major step forward in enabling small businesses growth, which could, in turn, facilitate re-investment, further growth and more access to credit.

Based on interviews with project staff at both Ouagadougou and regional levels, and the beneficiaries themselves, the evaluator believes that VSLA groups seem to be solidly trained and established. Interviews also showed a high degree of interest and commitment from the VSLA members, who have become more and more used to saving and taking loans.

An important step forward to consolidate the VSLA sustainability would be the formalization of a partnership with the *Caisse Populaire d'Epargne*, as it would allow the different VSLA groups to enter the "formal capital market" (adapted to the rural context). However, all parties involved stressed the importance (and the evaluator agrees) of providing continued technical support in the next couple of years to ensure that the different initiatives are fully consolidated and operational without further external support.

***Did the project contribute to a decrease in child labor in the implementation areas? What are the factors influencing or driving the decrease or lack of decrease in child labor? Analysis of the project-reported results for the POC indicators and comments on the reliability of the data.***

The quality of education is key in preventing and fighting child labor. The evaluation found that the project addressed the main factors influencing or driving the decrease in child labor. Through RCLES, different options were offered to child workers/children at risk, including formal/non-formal education and skills training. This offered multiple choices that allowed the project to adjust to the needs of different beneficiaries and intervention environments.

However, increased options to access education are not sufficient *per se*. For this reason, the project conducted awareness raising campaigns; provided economic support to cover education costs; and offered livelihood options to families. Combined, these interventions allowed 8,559 children to be prevented from entering or withdrawn from child labor and then referred to educational services. However, as mentioned before, this is based in qualitative data gathered among children, teachers, and parents. The evaluator cannot confirm that all these children are no longer working based only on qualitative data from the sample interviewed. On the other hand, there are still factors that influence households not to send their children to school. The most important are cultural and poverty/economic factors.

An important *cultural* factor is that some parents still do not fully perceive the value of education because it takes years to see its benefits. Meanwhile, children can contribute to family income, which encourages parents to keep children at home to help with chores, take care of the livestock or work in the cotton/mining sites, rather than send them to school. Also, the inaccessibility of schools, often located far away from communities and/or the lack of quality education contributes to making education less attractive than work.

*Analysis of the project-reported results for the POC indicators and comments on the reliability of the data.*

The data collection procedure for the project objective child labor (POC) indicators is the same as described earlier on in this chapter (E.Q. 2.b). The evaluator found that the data collection procedures were adequate and the reliability of data fairly consistent. Table 16 assesses the reliability of the POC indicators:

**Table 16: POC indicators**

POC Indicators	Baseline	Target	Total Results to date	Reliability
POC.1 % of project beneficiary children in child labor	50.83%	17.79%	15.24%	<b>High</b> Those in school do not work
POC.2 % of project beneficiary children engaged in hazardous child labor	7.16%	2.51%	0.36%	<b>High</b> Updated list of WFCL

Source: project performance data

According to the data provided by the RCLES team, **child labor involvement among beneficiary children was 50.83%** at the inception of the project (baseline data); **and 15.24%** at the end of the project. Along these lines, 7.16% of children were engaged in hazardous labor at the beginning of the project, against 0.36% at the end of the project.

***Did the project contribute to changes in the lives of beneficiary families that they attribute to the project?***

During the field visits carried out by the evaluator, different VSLA groups declared that savings and investments in livelihood activities allow for better support for their households. This translated in an increase of revenue that now contributes to the necessary expenses for their children to go to school and, to a certain extent, pay for their health care.

Also, some women pointed out that they can now better support orphans (placed with them) making it possible for them to attend school. Before, orphans stayed at home because their caretakers could not afford to pay for their schooling. Likewise, through discourse analysis, the evaluator discovered that VSLAs also promoted greater socialization and networking between women along with a stronger articulation of the issues that affect them.

Furthermore, women gained recognition from their communities, particularly among men, and are becoming well-respected members in their villages. In the course of a field visit, one of the village elders noted: “*we didn’t know that women could become so well organized!*” The VSLAs helped women access savings, capital, and initiate or strengthen small business, contributing to the household economy, thereby greatly contributing to their social and economic empowerment.

***Did beneficiary family household assets increase, and if, so by how much?***

The scope of the evaluation and the limited number of communities visited and beneficiaries interviewed prevented the evaluator from conducting a thorough assessment of this evaluation question. However, overall, VSLA beneficiaries manifested that their savings had increased and that access to communal credit allowed investing in their business and covering most of the education expenses. FFS and FAAB beneficiaries showed confidence in the trainings allowing them to increase their production and hence, their revenues.

According to a study conducted by the project in 2015<sup>11</sup>, households that had increased their incomes during the previous 12 months accounted for 37.70% of the cases. Seven categories of assets increased by at least one unit in the households during the previous 12 months. These assets include goats, poultry, sheep, arable land, cattle, and pigs. The study indicates that 63.35% of households had at least one member who undertakes an income generating activity. By the end of the project, according to the project’s TPRs, households with an increase in assets represented 47.60%.

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<sup>11</sup> *Assessment Study of RCLES Project’s Outcomes and Impacts Indicators in Boucle du Mouhoun, Cascades and Hauts Bassins Regions in Burkina Faso*



### 3.4. Sustainability

This section addresses the following evaluation question: ***What are the project's most and least sustainable strategies and what are the factors driving this sustainability/lack of sustainability? Has the project taken steps to transferring ownership of project components to the communities and/or region or national government?***

The RCLES sustainability strategy is twofold. First, the project was designed based on an integrated approach aimed at creating stronger links between child labor elimination and education through awareness raising; addressing education-based child labor drivers; and improving household livelihoods. Secondly, the project's approach to sustainability was successful in building capacities and working directly through local structures and stakeholders: community members, teachers and PTAs, CBOS, SPCFs, as well as with government agencies at the central and regional levels.

The evaluation found a well-defined approach for sustainability. The project's strategy is theoretically clear and pertinent and has been generally accepted by local populations and stakeholders, as well as, by regional and national authorities. Taking into consideration that these approaches are certainly pertinent, opinions gathered from key stakeholders highlight that further efforts should be invested in both strategies. In this regard, based on primary and secondary information, the evaluator considers the following factors as the key drivers of sustainability or the lack of sustainability.

#### **National Level**

##### ***Knowledge and capacities for national, regional and local stakeholders***

The project invested significant effort at increasing capacities and knowledge among national, regional and local stakeholders concerning child labor and education/skills training. Although the awareness levels and capacities improved significantly, additional technical and financial support will be necessary to ensure that these continue and increased or extended.

##### ***Ownership among project partners and stakeholders.***

The RCLES project was able to gather a wide range of partners in support of its activities and objectives (Ministries of Labor, Education, Social Affairs, etc.; district and local governments; communities; schools; NGOs; etc.). Also, the project's approach to address child labor was useful in creating ownership among project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

On the other hand, a prevalent opinion among important informants is that, national and local ownership might be dependent on future availability of further resources (technical, financial and human). Without persistent government support and donor commitment, the prospect of sustaining project outcomes is uncertain.

### ***National policies and law enforcement***

Primary and secondary evidence show that during the last decade, the government made noteworthy efforts to tackle the child labor challenge such as ratifying the ILO Conventions 138 and 182, and revising accordingly the Labor and Education Codes; reinforcing the labor inspectorate; adopting a National Action Plan on Child Labor (NAP) and sectorial plans. Furthermore, the labor ministry official interviewed during the course of this evaluation manifested that consultations have started to update the NAP and *upgrade* it into a *National Strategy*.

However, the Burkinabé Government and institutions still face important technical, institutional, human and financial shortcomings to tackle the child labor challenge, such as universalizing education and effectively enforcing relevant laws.

### ***Financial aspects***

Whereas national ownership and capacities were enhanced, and child labor was incorporated into national planning and legislation, it is unclear whether explicit funding will exist in the future to effectively implement child labor and education strategies and policies. Ongoing support from development partners such as Counterpart International, USDOL, and other donors will be necessary, especially at the local/regional levels to guarantee that the RCLES accomplishments are sustainable in the near future.

## **Local Level**

### ***Awareness on child labor and education***

It is evident that child labor is undeniably related to families' economic status (poverty). However, the evaluator observed that, in the intervention areas visited, cultural drivers still remain present. Despite the increased awareness generated by the RCLES project, some parents still have the impression that work is a form of apprenticeship for their children, and a source of income for the family. In this regard and also based on the information contained in the project's TPRs, awareness of the negative effects of child labor and the benefits of education might not yet be fully understood and will therefore require further financial and technical support.

### ***Access to quality education***

Notwithstanding notable efforts made by the project in terms of providing children with educational alternatives, as well as training PTA/MTA and COGES (School Management Committees) members on their roles and responsibilities related to child labor and how they can contribute to maintaining children in school, the evaluator's perception is that additional support is needed to monitor children's attendance; make sure that children remain in school; broaden access to education; and improve the quality of education. Also, there is a need to trace the transition from skills training to the labor market.

## **Livelihoods**

From multiple interviews, the evaluator found that RCLES contributed to strengthening the beneficiaries' capacities in the areas of finances, organization, and entrepreneurship. However, these same beneficiaries, as well as project staff, manifested that such capacities might still not be sufficient for assuring the sustainability of the project's achievements.

Likewise, prospects for economic/business-management (VSLA/FAAB beneficiaries), so as to ensure their autonomous development, do not appear to be sufficiently strong. The same applies to apprentices/students in vocational training. There is widespread agreement among key informants that both categories of beneficiaries need further technical support and supervision to start and consolidate their trade.

There is an overall commitment among implementing partners (Ministries of Youth; Agriculture; and Animal Husbandry), to continue to offer services to beneficiary households and communities as part of their central mandates. Still, these agencies are subject to scarce financial resources. These agricultural and animal husbandry extension agents depended on RCLES allowances to support beneficiaries. Their ability to continue providing services will depend on highly unlikely public allocations.

Although the potential of the livelihood component is enormous, the challenges are still significant: management, marketing, bookkeeping and the generation of significant (and sustainable) revenues in the short-term still seem uncertain. Further external support (technical assistance and funds) will be required for the livelihood component to take root and ripen.

## **Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS)**

The RCLES project provided assistance to design and implement a pilot Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS), whose implementation was under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labor. As expressed during the interviews, the MOL/DLTE has initiated consultations with the donor community to support the evaluation of the pilot CLMS and, eventually, scale-up the CLMS. While this is a clear sign that the government is committed to sustaining child labor monitoring, it still needs technical and financial support to fully develop and sustain the CLMS.

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## IV. LESSONS LEARNED, GOOD PRACTICES, AND CONCLUSIONS

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### 4.1. Lessons Learned

1. Initially, RCLES was to be implemented in partnership by Counterpart International (CI) and Terre des Hommes. A lesson learned from RCLES is that, when implementing a project in tandem, grantees must clearly define and formally agree on strategies; operating and administrative procedures; responsibilities; division of tasks, areas of intervention, activities; human resources management and salaries; etc. well before its kick-off. Not doing so could cause disagreements that might harm the partnership and result in one of the agencies withdrawing from project implementation.
2. In Burkina Faso, a country with heavily centralized administrations, it was necessary for CI to establish their HQ in the country's capital. Government regional agencies have little space to maneuver without central level approval (and often budget allocation). Decisions are regularly taken at the central level, and bureaucracy is weighty and demands permanent coordination with the concerned ministries. Being close by thereby facilitates a swift implementation of project activities.
3. The projects' large coverage and the vast amount targeted beneficiary children, along with limited results and time-frame, did not contribute to supporting its implementation and also, somehow limited the "quality approach to education" searched by the project.
4. The RCLES reduced implementation schedule hindered the likelihood of achieving substantial long-term effects since they require a deep change in social habits. For education to become a strong alternative to child labour, both the mentality of the people involved must change and also the real returns from education must be seen clearly. Likewise, skills training activities need to contemplate the full cycle of training-insertion-tracking and therefore should have enough time and resources to do so.

### 4.2. Good Practices

1. Offering varied education services, such as primary education, secondary education and skills training provided a varied array of opportunities that were able to adjust to the diverse contexts and children's' needs. Skills training was especially diversified and relevant, and was provided using the resources at hand including non-formal training centers or informal sector artisans.
2. Improving capacities and awareness of community and school members by way of training and learning meetings. The "school community" (principals, teachers, PTAs), volunteers and district social workers improved their capabilities to deal with child labor issues, and community members became more attentive and aware of child labor issues.

3. By increasing household incomes, the project decreased some of the burden of children having to work and allowed them to participate in educational activities. Taking into account that poverty is one of the principal causes of children having to work; addressing it is an effective way of fighting child labor and enrolling children in school.
4. FFS and FAAB allowed beneficiaries to be trained in their village in a trade they already knew. They now have the opportunity to keep developing an (enhanced) economic activity in their communities. Through VSLAs, access to financial services, savings and credit, could facilitate re-investment, growth and more access to credit and thus improve their economic activities and income. In the long term, this has the potential for further improving school enrollment and reducing child labor.

### 4.3. Conclusions

The following chapter presents a synthesis of the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the findings and is organized in correspondence with the four evaluation criteria: Effectiveness; Validity of the ToC and CMEP; Potential Impact; and Sustainability.

#### 4.3.1. Effectiveness

- The implementation of project activities was significantly influenced by the political unrest the country experienced during 2014-15. Once the political situation stabilized, RCLES began implementation in early 2016. Although USDOL approved a no-cost extension until July 2017, the actual implementation schedule was considerably reduced.
- Also, differences on child protection approaches, administrative procedures, division of activities, salaries, etc. caused disagreement between Terre des Hommes (TdH) and CI, which resulted in TdH withdrawing from RCLES early on in the project.
- Despite these challenges, overall, the project achieved most of the expected outcomes.
- The project was successful in establishing solid relationships with a wide range of government agencies, both at the central, regional and provincial level. Likewise, the project engaged with national and international NGOs.
- The project's partnerships contributed to building a culture of collective action against child labor by increasing cooperation among different actors. There is evidence that this has led to the formation/reinforcement of the *Reseaux de Protection de l'Enfance* (RPE, Child Protection Networks) in the regions targeted by the project. Furthermore, the RPE and the recently created CLMS are opening the way for monitoring and identifying children in labor, and have helped in having some of them referred to schools/social services.
- Furthermore, RCLES provided support to the labor ministry to review, update and validate the list of Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL).
- The labor ministry, with the support of the RCLES project, started the implementation of CLMS pilot phase in 6 villages from 2 provinces of the Boucle du Mouhoun region. The MOL/DLTE intends to evaluate and scale-up the CLMS

- There is potential to build upon the RCLES achievements by supporting the evaluation of the pilot CLMS and on the basis of its results, further explore the possibility of scaling-up the CLMS.

#### **4.3.2. Validity of the ToC and CMEP**

- The project's ToC is all-encompassing and the strategy and intervention methodologies chosen were, in general, appropriate for correctly addressing the causal factors behind child labor in the areas and sectors targeted by the project. Furthermore, there is a strong causal argument that connects the projects main elements: IO, outcomes, outputs and activities.
- The project followed a sound intervention strategy as it worked towards building stronger links between child labor elimination interventions and education. This was done through a multi-pronged approach to combat child labor
- Due especially to the delays in the project's kick-off and the resources available, RCLES could have been more effective by focusing its interventions in fewer regions, provinces and communities (and schools).
- Also, as project staff explained, "there were pre-defined targets that we had to reach; often very ambitious in relation to the socio-political context; the large geographical area to be covered; and the available human and financial resources".
- There is consensus among project staff that CMEP was instrumental for project monitoring and management. However, the CMEP is regarded by project staff to be a highly complicated tool that needs highly trained staff to correctly manage it.
- Data reported under the CMEP indicators are generally accurate and reliable. Furthermore, discussions with project staff and SPCFs showed that they take their responsibilities regarding data collection, analysis and reporting seriously.

#### **4.3.3. Potential impact**

- The livelihood component of the project (VSLA, FFS, FAAB) generated a significant impetus in the communities and in particular, the VSLAs seem to hold promising prospects in increasing beneficiary households' income, which could eventually have an impact in improving school enrollment, attendance, and thus contribute to decreasing the prevalence of child labor.
- The project addressed the main factors influencing the decrease in child labor. Through RCLES, different options were offered to child workers/children at risk, including formal/non-formal education and skills training. Also, the project conducted awareness raising campaigns; provided economic support to cover education costs; and offered livelihood options to families.
- According to the data provided by the RCLES team, child labor involvement among beneficiary children was 50.83% at the inception of the project (baseline data); and

15.24% at the end of the project. Along these lines, 7.16% of children were engaged in hazardous labor at the beginning of the project, against 0.36% at the end of the project.

- VSLA groups declared that savings and investments in livelihood activities allow for better support for their households. This translated in an increase of revenue that now contributes to the necessary expenses for their children to go to school and, to a certain extent, pay for their health care. Also, some women pointed out that they can now better support orphans (placed with them) making it possible for them to attend school.
- VSLAs also promoted greater socialization and networking between women along with a stronger articulation of the issues that affect them. Furthermore, women gained recognition from their communities, particularly among men, and are becoming well respected members in their villages.
- According to a study conducted by the project in 2015, households that had increased their incomes during the previous 12 months accounted for 37.70% of the cases. The study indicates that 63.35% of households had at least one member who undertakes an income generating activity. By the end of the project, according to the project's TPRs, households with an increase in assets represented 47.60%.

#### **4.3.4. Sustainability**

- The RCLES sustainability strategy is twofold. First, the project was designed based on an integrated approach aimed at creating stronger links between child labor elimination and education through awareness raising; addressing education-based child labor drivers; and improving household livelihoods.
- Secondly, the project's approach to sustainability was successful in building capacities and working directly through local structures and stakeholders: community members, teachers and PTAs, CBOS, SPCFs, CPNs, as well as with government agencies at the central and regional levels.
- The evaluation found a well-defined approach for sustainability. The project's strategy is theoretically clear and pertinent and has been generally accepted by local populations and stakeholders, as well as, by regional and national authorities.
- Taking into consideration that these approaches are certainly pertinent, further efforts (namely technical assistance and financial support) should be invested in order to reinforce: knowledge and capacities for national, regional and local stakeholders; ownership among project partners and stakeholders; national policies and law enforcement; awareness on child labor and education; access to quality education; livelihood services; and, CLMS.

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## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

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The evaluator would like to stress that, as already mentioned in the report, child labor in Burkina Faso is particularly high among sub-Saharan countries, and that 48% of children of official primary school age are out of school. At the same time, especially during the last decade, the Government of Burkina Faso has confirmed its commitment to address child labor and the country has taken significant steps forward.

The RCLES project was highly relevant, implemented with efficacy and contributed to generating significant results at national and local levels. However, key stakeholders consulted in this evaluation manifested that without further assistance, the projects' achievements risk fading and, eventually, completely vanishing in the mid-term.

National partners and beneficiaries alike request additional backing from USDOL/Counterpart International and the donor community to consolidate the results achieved to date.

The following recommendations are based on the findings made in this evaluation and follow from the lessons learned and the conclusions. The recommendations may be useful for USDOL/Counterpart International or other agencies if they wish to continue implementing education based child labor initiatives with their own resources and/or other donor funds.

### **5.1. Provide further financial and technical assistance to sustain the results achieved to date**

Based on the findings and evidence gathered on national stakeholders interviewed at the central and decentralized levels and beneficiaries, the evaluator considers that further support (technical assistance, funds, linkages to other resources, government resources) to key project interventions will greatly contribute to strengthening the sustainability of the achieved results.

### **5.2. Reinforce awareness raising on child labor and education**

It is essential to continue to build awareness regarding child labor and the importance of education with an ongoing commitment from communities, parents and children to make sure that people do not revert to previous practices regarding participation in child labor and education.

Further support and follow-up for children enrolled in education to ensure that they complete their respective cycles is highly recommended. Additional technical support and funding are needed to reduce the dropout rate, while tackling early marriages and pregnancies is essential to insuring that girls attend and remain in school.



### **5.3. More emphasis should be placed on improving the quality of education**

Quality education is key in preventing and fighting child labor, but also child labor seriously hinders school enrolment and attendance. In Burkina Faso the quality of education continues to be a challenge that needs to be addressed by the government with financial and technical support from the donor community: improved infrastructure; enhanced teacher training; reduced teacher/student ratio; availability of learning materials, school canteens, bathrooms; access to safe water and electricity, etc.

### **5.4. Reinforce and expand the livelihood options**

It is necessary to continue providing technical assistance and external support to better develop and extend livelihood activities and reinforce their sustainability prospects. In the short-term, it is urgent that:

- The Ministry of Agriculture continues to provide its support to the FAAB and FFS beneficiaries so that they can harvest of agricultural products as well as continue animal husbandry product marketing activities.
- The Ministry of Animal Husbandry provides further support to the FAAB beneficiaries in the management of the IGA; develop business plans; marketing of their products; and reinvestment of profits as well as monitor their progress.
- Counterpart International must give priority to negotiations with the *Caisse Populaire d'Epargne* (before the end of the project) so that VSLA and FAAB beneficiaries can benefit from its services.
- Counterpart International must also prioritize the distribution of the installation kits to young trainees so they can start their business/trades as soon as possible.
- RCLES and MOL/Department of Youth should provide certification of completion for skills training to ensure recognition of the training received and the competences acquired by participants in the “apprenticeship” modality.
- RCLES should bring on board the apprentices’ masters, so they can mentor trainees after receiving their installation kits and supervise and counsel the start-up of their business.
- The Ministry of Youth should support young trainees to facilitate their transition into the job market.

### **5.5. Strengthen the role of trade unions**

Future child labor interventions should consider strengthening the role of trade unions in awareness-raising and mobilization; allow workers to become more organized; promote social dialogue; collective bargaining, combat poverty, decent work deficits and other causes of child labor.

## **5.6. Participation of the industry**

Future interventions should make efforts for the industry to participate in the child labor fight. The industry must commit to respect fundamental rights at work, including the elimination of child labor in the cotton and gold supply chain in both sectors and to improve working conditions of legal age youth working in the plantations and mines.

## **5.7. Exit strategy**

Counterpart International should prepare a sustainability or "exit" strategy before the end of the project. It is also advisable that CI convene the GTPE to present the RCLES achievements and pending issues and look for opportunities for other NGOs/agencies to carry on certain activities.

## **5.8. Support to CLMS**

Technical and financial support should be provided to carry out an evaluation of the pilot CLMS and socialize its results; and, eventually, based on its results, support its scale-up. The organization a "donor conference" by the MOL might be useful in mobilizing potential partners and donors in supporting the CLMS scale-up.

## **5.9. CMEP training**

CMEP is essential in USDOL child labor projects management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. However, its implementation is complex and needs highly trained human resources.

In future projects, and after the initial CMEP workshops, the USDOL should provide a thorough training on the CMEP, not only for M&E officers; but also to Project Managers and Project Specialists. The USDOL might also consider to devise a form of "continuous training" in cases where project staff turnover is high and frequent.

A possibility could be developing a "training kit" and conducting Training of Trainers with the grantees, so they can replicate the trainings as needed with the implementing counterparts in the countries. On-line training could also be an option; however, the modules should be translated at least to French, Spanish and Portuguese.

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## ANNEXES

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## ANNEX A: Terms of Reference

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b> <b>INDEPENDENT FINAL EVALUATION</b> <b><i>REDUCING CHILD LABOR THROUGH EDUCATION AND SERVICES</i></b></p>
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Cooperative Agreement Number	IL-23984-13-75-K
Financing Agency	U.S. Department of Labor
Grantee Organization	Counterpart International
Dates of Project Implementation	December 27, 2012 to July 31, 2017
Type of Evaluation	Independent Final Evaluation
Evaluation Field Work Dates	April 3-11, 2017
Preparation Date of TOR	March 8, 2017
Funding Total	US \$5,000,000

## **I. Background and Justification**

The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is an office within the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). OCFT activities include research on international child labor; supporting U.S. government policy on international child labor; administering and overseeing cooperative agreements with organizations working to eliminate child labor around the world; and raising awareness about child labor issues.

Since 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated over \$900 million to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects to combat exploitive child labor in more than 90 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL range from targeted action programs in specific sectors of work to more comprehensive programs that support national efforts to eliminate child labor. USDOL-funded child labor elimination projects generally seek to achieve five major goals:

1. Reducing exploitative child labor, especially the worst forms through the provision of direct educational services and by addressing root causes of child labor, including innovative strategies to promote sustainable livelihoods of target households;
2. Strengthening policies on child labor, education, and sustainable livelihoods, and the capacity of national institutions to combat child labor, address its root causes, and promote formal, non-formal and vocational education opportunities to provide children with alternatives to child labor;
3. Raising awareness of exploitative child labor and its root causes, and the importance of education for all children and mobilizing a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures;
4. Supporting research, evaluation, and the collection of reliable data on child labor, its root causes, and effective strategies, including educational and vocational alternatives, microfinance and other income generating activities to improve household income; and
5. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

USDOL-funded child labor elimination projects are designed to ensure that children in areas with a high incidence of child labor are withdrawn and integrated into educational settings, and that they persist in their education once enrolled. In parallel, the program seeks to avert at-risk children from leaving school and entering child labor. The projects are based on the notion that the elimination of exploitative child labor depends, to a large extent, on improving access to, quality of, and relevance of education. Without improving educational quality and relevance, children withdrawn/prevented from child labor may not have viable alternatives and could resort

to other forms of hazardous work.

In FY 2010, Congress provided new authority to ILAB to expand activities related to income generating activities, including microfinance, to help projects expand income generation and address poverty more effectively. The addition of this livelihood focus is based on the premise that if adult family members have sustainable livelihoods, they will be less likely to have their dependent children work and more likely to keep them to school.

The approach of USDOL child labor elimination projects – decreasing the prevalence of exploitive child labor through increased access to education and improving the livelihoods of vulnerable families – is intended to nurture the development, health, safety, and enhanced future employability of children engaged in or at-risk of entering exploitive labor.

### **Project Context <sup>12</sup>**

Burkina Faso is a small, landlocked country that, throughout its 55 years of independence, has always been desperately poor. The country is ranked 181 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) each year. Its dry climate with periodic drought has made food security and access to water difficult for the population of around 17 million people. Only 11 percent of the population, mostly in urban centers, has access to water. Low literacy, overcrowded schools, chronic malnutrition, high maternal mortality and other grim indices contribute to high vulnerability, especially for children.

Child labor is rampant, often considered a necessity for the basic survival of families. Conditions cross into the worst forms of child labor, including dangerous activities in sectors such as agriculture and mining. In 2011, gold production had increased 32 percent since 2009 at six commercial gold mine sites, making Burkina Faso the fourth-largest gold producer in Africa. The boom at commercial mines encouraged a burgeoning industry of small-holder, artisanal mines throughout the country. Children are engaged in actual mining, which is extremely dangerous, and also in many ancillary activities. For example, products that must be hauled into the sites, such as drinking water, are triple the normal cost, and selling them afford a good day's wage for young teenagers. Children can be seen all around the squatter camps engaged in petty vending, breaking rocks, hauling and other moderately to extremely hazardous activities.

The cotton plantations where RCLES works are mostly smallholdings run either by a family or by a landowner. The work can be rough and demanding, often requiring more than a child should be expected to handle. According to informants during the interim evaluation, most children no longer work where chemicals are used or in similarly hazardous activities, but they do carry heavy loads, work in the hot sun for long hours and use crude tools to cut trees and brush.

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<sup>12</sup> Information for the context was taken from the midterm evaluation report and the CMEP.

Mothers have their small children with them because there are no nurseries. These small children may be exposed to toxic products.

### **Project Specific Information<sup>13</sup>**

The project goal is to reduce the number of children aged 6–17 years who are working, or at risk of working, in the agricultural cotton production or gold mining sectors in Burkina Faso. Specifically, RCLES intends to reach 10,000 Burkinabe children and withdraw them from or prevent them from engaging in the hazardous work. The direct beneficiaries of the project and desired outcomes are categorized as follows:

- 4,000 children and youth, aged 6–17 years, withdrawn from exploitative child labor in cotton fields and artisanal gold mining and enrolled in educational programs
- 6,000 at-risk children and youth, aged 6–17 years, prevented from exploitative child labor in cotton fields and artisanal gold mining and enrolled in educational programs, including:
  - 2,000 presently in school
  - 4,000 children not presently in school
- 1,000 households of children engaged in, or at risk of being engaged in, child labor in the cotton fields and artisanal gold mining develop safe and alternative sources of livelihood and income.

As stated in the CMEP, the project objective is to contribute to reducing the incidence of child labor in the cotton fields and artisanal gold mining sites in the Cascades, Hauts-Bassins and Boucle du Mouhoun regions by the end of 2016. To achieve its general objective, the project has identified the following five intermediary objectives, or IOs:

- IO1: Target populations' attitudes changed to reflect a negative view of child labor/hazardous child labor and a positive view of education.
- IO2: Use of social protection services by target households has increased.
- IO3: Target children and youth have increased participation in education.
- IO4: The incomes and assets of target households and youth have increased.
- IO5: Public sector, cotton and gold producers and community structures address child labor.

Project activities provide access to education and training services for target children and improve the economic well-being of families and households through youth employment and livelihood opportunities so that children need not be engaged in working. Other activities include strengthening the capacity of government agencies to fight against child labor (CL); raising

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<sup>13</sup> Information for the project description was taken from the CMEP.

awareness about child labor in the general public; and fostering sustainability of project efforts through capacity building and technical support. These action components of R  
CLES may be described as awareness raising and social protection; education; livelihoods and youth employment; and strengthening institutional capacity and policies, and are listed as such in the budget under “activities.”

## **II. Purpose and Scope of Evaluation**

### **Evaluation Purpose**

The purpose of the evaluation should be to assess the extent to which the RCLES project achieved its outcomes and the sustainability of those outcomes. The evaluation will also examine which factors have proved critical in helping or hindering results and potential sustainability. Finally, the evaluation will identify key lessons learned, good practices, and recommendations for future projects.

### **Intended Users**

The evaluation will provide OCFT, the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project’s experience in implementation, its effects on project beneficiaries, and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will serve to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate. The evaluation report will be published on the USDOL website, so the report should be written as a standalone document, providing the necessary background information for readers who are unfamiliar with the details of the project.

### **Evaluation Questions**

1. What are the most and least sustainability strategies of the project and what are the factors driving this sustainability/lack of sustainability? Has the project taken steps to transfer ownership of project components to the communities and/or region or national government?
2. Assess the impact of VSLAs on households’ economic situation and child labor prevalence within VSLA participant households. What is the likelihood of their continued existence after the project ends?
3. Assess the success of the Child Labor Monitoring System pilot. What are the prospects for sustainability and scaling up of the pilot?



4. Did the project achieve its outcomes as stated in the results framework? What external or internal factors contributed to achievements and what factors hindered achievement?
5. Did the project contribute to a decrease in child labor in implementation areas? What are the factors influencing or driving the decrease or lack of decrease in child labor? Please include an analysis of the project-reported results for the POC indicators and comment on the reliability of the data.
6. Did the project contribute to changes in the lives of beneficiary families that they attribute to the project? Did beneficiary family household assets increase and if so by how much?
7. Did the CMEP provide a useful framework for project monitoring and management? How reliable is the data reported under the CMEP indicators? Please choose a sample of indicators and look into how the project collected/calculated/reported the data to DOL?
8. Were the project's efforts to key stakeholders including the Government of Burkina Faso successful? What was achieved?
9. Did the project's Theory of Change and overall design prove to be accurate as the project is coming to an end? Retrospectively, could the project have benefitted from a more focused approach, given the resources it had?
10. Have the project's partnerships at the local and national level contributed to the achievement of its outcomes?

### **III. Evaluation Methodology and Timeframe**

#### **Approach**

The evaluation approach will be qualitative and participatory in nature, and use project documents including CMEP data to provide quantitative information. Qualitative information will be obtained through field visits, interviews and focus groups as appropriate. Opinions coming from beneficiaries (teachers, parents and children) will improve and clarify the use of quantitative analysis. The participatory nature of the evaluation will contribute to the sense of ownership among beneficiaries.

Quantitative data will be drawn from the CMEP and project reports to the extent that it is available and incorporated in the analysis. The evaluation approach will be independent in terms of the membership of the evaluation team. Project staff and implementing partners will generally only be present in meetings with stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries to provide introductions. The following additional principles will be applied during the evaluation process:

1. Methods of data collection and stakeholder perspectives will be triangulated for as many as possible of the evaluation questions.
2. Efforts will be made to include parents' and children's voices and beneficiary participation generally, using child-sensitive approaches to interviewing children

following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research with children on the worst forms of child labor (<http://www.ilo.org/ipeinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=3026>) and UNICEF Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children ([http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_tools\\_guidelines.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_tools_guidelines.html)).

3. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be integrated in the evaluation approach.
4. Consultations will incorporate a degree of flexibility to maintain a sense of ownership of the stakeholders and beneficiaries, allowing additional questions to be posed that are not included in the TOR, whilst ensuring that key information requirements are met.
5. As far as possible, a consistent approach will be followed in each project site, with adjustments made for the different actors involved, activities conducted, and the progress of implementation in each locality.

## **Evaluation Team**

The evaluation team will consist of the international evaluator and, as appropriate, an interpreter fluent in necessary languages will travel with the evaluator. One member of the project staff may travel with the team to make introductions. This person is not involved in the evaluation process.

The international evaluator will be responsible for developing the methodology in consultation with O'Brien and Associates, International, USDOL, and the project staff; assigning the tasks of the national consultant and interpreter for the field work; directly conducting interviews and facilitating other data collection processes; analysis of the evaluation material gathered; presenting feedback on the initial findings of the evaluation to the national stakeholder meeting and preparing the evaluation report.

## **Data Collection Methodology**

### **1. Document Review**

- Pre-field visit preparation includes extensive review of relevant documents
- During fieldwork, documentation will be verified and additional documents may be collected
- Documents may include:
  - CMEP documents
  - Baseline and endline survey reports
  - Project document and revisions,
  - Cooperative Agreement,
  - Technical Progress and Status Reports,
  - Work plans,
  - Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports,
  - Management Procedures and Guidelines,
  - Research or other reports undertaken (baseline studies, etc.), and
  - Project files (including school records) as appropriate.

## 2. Question Matrix

Before beginning fieldwork, the evaluator will create a question matrix, which outlines the source of data from where the evaluator plans to collect information for each TOR question. This will help the evaluator make decisions as to how they are going to allocate their time in the field. It will also help the evaluator to ensure that they are exploring all possible avenues for data triangulation and to clearly note where their evaluation findings are coming from. The Contractor will share the question matrix with USDOL.

## 3. Interviews with stakeholders

Informational interviews will be held with as many project stakeholders as possible. The evaluator will solicit the opinions of children, community members in areas where awareness-raising activities occurred, parents of beneficiaries, teachers, government representatives, legal authorities, union and NGO officials, the action program implementers, and program staff regarding the project's accomplishments, program design, sustainability, and the working relationship between project staff and their partners, where appropriate.

Depending on the circumstances, these meetings will be one-on-one or group interviews. Technically, stakeholders are all those who have an interest in a project, for example, as implementers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, community leaders, donors, and government officials. Thus, it is anticipated that meetings will be held with:

- OCFT staff responsible for this evaluation and project prior to the commencement of the field work
- Implementers at all levels, including child labor monitors involved in assessing whether children have been effectively prevented or withdrawn from child labor situations
- Headquarters, Country Director, Project Managers, and Field Staff of Grantee and Partner Organizations
- Government Ministry Officials and Local Government Officials who have been involved in or are knowledgeable about the project
- Community leaders, members, and volunteers
- School teachers, assistants, school directors, education personnel
- Project beneficiaries (children withdrawn and prevented and their parents)
- Mining companies
- International NGOs and multilateral agencies working in the area
- Other child protection and/or education organizations, committees and experts in the area
- U.S. Embassy staff member

## 4. Field Visits

The evaluator will visit a selection of project sites that will include the three regions where the project is implemented. However, more emphasis should be placed on the northern region where a child labor monitoring system is being implemented. The final selection of field sites to be visited will be made by the evaluator. Every effort should be made to include some sites where the project experienced successes and others that encountered challenges, as well as a good cross

section of sites across targeted CL sectors. During the visits, the evaluator will observe the activities and outputs developed by the project. Focus groups with children and parents will be held, and interviews will be conducted with representatives from local governments, NGOs, community leaders and teachers.

### **Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality**

The evaluation mission will observe utmost confidentiality related to sensitive information and feedback elicited during the individual and group interviews. To mitigate bias during the data collection process and ensure a maximum freedom of expression of the implementing partners, stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries, implementing partner staff will generally not be present during interviews. However, implementing partner staff may accompany the evaluator to make introductions whenever necessary, to facilitate the evaluation process, make respondents feel comfortable, and to allow the evaluator to observe the interaction between the implementing partner staff and the interviewees.

### **Stakeholder Meeting**

Following the field visits, a stakeholders meeting will be conducted by the evaluator that brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including the implementing partners and other interested parties. The list of participants to be invited will be drafted prior to the evaluator's visit and confirmed in consultation with project staff during fieldwork.

The meeting will be used to present the major preliminary findings and emerging issues, solicit recommendations, and obtain clarification or additional information from stakeholders, including those not interviewed earlier. The agenda of the meeting will be determined by the evaluator in consultation with project staff. Some specific questions for stakeholders may be prepared to guide the discussion and possibly a brief written feedback form.

The agenda is expected to include some of the following items:

1. Presentation by the evaluator of the preliminary main findings
2. Feedback and questions from stakeholders on the findings
3. Opportunity for implementing partners not met to present their views on progress and challenges in their locality
4. If appropriate, Possible Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise on the project's performance
5. Discussion of recommendations to improve the implementation and ensure sustainability. Consideration will be given to the value of distributing a feedback form for participants to nominate their "action priorities" for the remainder of the project.

The project was originally located in Bobo, but has since moved to Ouagadougou. In consultation with USDOL and the evaluator, the project should recommend the most appropriate location for the stakeholder meeting. A debrief call will be held with the evaluator and USDOL

after the stakeholder workshop to provide USDOL with preliminary findings and solicit feedback as needed.

## **Limitations**

Fieldwork for the evaluation will last two weeks and the evaluator will not have enough time to visit all project sites. As a result, the evaluator will not be able to take all sites into consideration when formulating their findings. All efforts will be made to ensure that the evaluator is visiting a representative sample of sites, including some that have performed well and some that have experienced challenges.

This is not a formal impact assessment. Findings for the evaluation will be based on information collected from background documents and in interviews with stakeholders, project staff, and beneficiaries. The accuracy of the evaluation findings will be determined by the integrity of information provided to the evaluator from these sources.

## **Timetable**

The tentative timetable is as follows. Actual dates may be adjusted as needs arise.

Task	Date
Background project documents sent to Contractor	Feb 19
Evaluation purpose and questions submitted to Contractor	Feb 21
Draft TOR sent to OCFT and Grantee	Feb 27
Cable clearance information submitted to USDOL	Mar 3
Finalize TOR	Mar 6
Logistics call to discuss logistics and field itinerary	Mar 16
Contractor sends minutes from logistics call	Mar 16
Interview call with USDOL & Project Staff	TBD
Fieldwork	Apr 3-14
Post-fieldwork debrief call	Apr 19
Draft report to USDOL & Grantee for 48 hour review	May 15
Comments due to Contractor	May 17
Report revised and sent for 2-week review	May 22
USDOL and stakeholder comments after full 2-week review	June 2
Final report to USDOL	June 12
Final approval of report	TBD
Final edited and 508 compliant report to COR	TBD

## **IV. Expected Outputs/Deliverables**

Ten working days following the evaluator's return from fieldwork, a first draft evaluation report will be submitted to the Contractor. The report should have the following structure and content:

### **I. Table of Contents**

- II. List of Acronyms
- III. Executive Summary
- IV. Project Description (Project Context, Project Targets and Objectives)
- V. Evaluation Objectives, Key Questions, and Methodology
- VI. Evaluation Findings
  - A. Answers to each of the evaluation questions, with supporting evidence included
- VII. Lessons Learned, Good Practices, and Conclusions
  - A. Lessons Learned
  - B. Good Practices
  - C. Conclusions
- VIII. Annexes - including set of most recent set of CMEP indicators and data, list of documents reviewed; field schedule, list of interviews/meetings/focus groups held; stakeholder workshop agenda, outputs, and participants; TOR; etc.

The total length of the report should be approximately 30 pages for the main report, excluding the executive summary and annexes.

The first draft of the report will be circulated to OCFT and key stakeholders individually for their review. Comments from stakeholders will be consolidated and incorporated into the final reports as appropriate, and the evaluator will provide a response to OCFT, in the form of a comment matrix, as to why any comments might not have been incorporated.

While the substantive content of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the report shall be determined by the evaluator, the report is subject to final approval by ILAB/OCFT in terms of whether or not the report meets the conditions of the TOR.

## **V. Evaluation Management and Support**

The Contractor will be responsible for Evaluation Management and Support.

## **ANNEX B: Master List of Interview Questions**

### **General assessment on the project:**

- Strengths and weaknesses
- Were project strategies, methodologies and overall approach relevant to achieve the project goals?
- Results (planned or unplanned) obtained so far by the project (Education, Livelihoods, CLMS, etc.)
- Have there been (un)foreseen external factors that affected the project's implementation/results?
- Were the project's efforts to key stakeholders including the Government of Burkina Faso successful? What was achieved?
- Have the project's partnerships at the local and national level contributed to the achievement of its outcomes?

### **Validity of the ToC:**

- Did it prove to be accurate as the project is coming to an end?
- Retrospectively, could the project have benefitted from a more focused approach, given the resources it had?

### **Utilization of a CMEP:**

- How useful was it to guide the management and monitoring?
- Who was responsible for collecting the information/indicators?
- Was the information analyzed?
- Did this information provide feedback to project management?
- Did it provide feedback that allowed adjusting the project's course?
- Quality and relevance of indicators?

## **CLMS**

- Effectiveness of Support to CLMS?
- Sustainability of support to CLMS?
- Prospects for CLMS replication/scaling up?

## **Livelihoods/VSLAs**

- Key factors that contributed to and that hindered the success of the livelihood component?
- Have the project's interventions contributed to improve the households' economic situation?
- Did beneficiary family household assets increase and if so by how much?
- Impact on child labor prevalence within VSLA participant households?
- What is the likelihood of their continued existence after the project ends?

## **Impacts**

- Did the project contribute to changes in the lives of beneficiary families?
- Did the project contribute to a decrease in child labor in implementation areas?
- What are the factors influencing or driving the decrease or lack of decrease in child labor?

## **Sustainability**

- Has the project a sustainability strategy?
- What are the factors driving this sustainability/lack of sustainability?
- What steps has the project taken to transfer ownership of project components to the communities and/or region or national government?



- To what extent National/Local awareness and ownership on CL has improved?
- To what extent national stakeholders are committed (e.g. through policy and budgetary support) in contributing towards the RCLES outcomes/outputs sustainability.
- What are the remaining challenges/deficits?
- Does the country need further external support to strengthen its capacity to combat CL?
- In that case, what could be USDOL/Counterpart's contribution?

**Are there any other issues you would like to address/discuss?**

## **ANNEX C: List of Documents Reviewed**

- Cooperative Agreement
- Project Document
- Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Technical Progress Reports (2013-2016)
- Audits documents
- RCLES Baseline Report
- RCLES Correspondence
- RCLES Interim Evaluation Report
- USDOL Trip reports
- The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalization in the ECOWAS region. ILO-UCW
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2010-2012
- Assessment Study of RCLES Project's Outcomes and Impacts Indicators in Boucle du Mouhoun, Cascades and Hauts Bassins Regions in Burkina Faso

#### **ANNEX D: List of Persons Interviewed**

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## ANNEX E: Fieldwork Itinerary

Date	Localities	Timing	Description
Sunday April 2, 2017	<b>7:45pm : Arrival to Ouagadougou</b>		
Monday April 3, 2017		• 9:00am - 2:00 pm	• Meeting with RCLES Staff
		• 3:00 pm	• Educo
Tuesday April 4, 2017	Ouagadougou	• 11:00 am	• Fond enfant (GiZ)
		• 12 :30 pm	• Ministry in Charge of Labor
		• 2:00pm	• Ministry in Charge of Youth
		• 3:00 pm	• Ministry in Charge of Education
		• 4:30 pm	• Union of Gold Miners
		• 6:30 pm	• Terre des Hommes
Wednesday April 5, 2017	Ouagadougou	• 9:30 am	• US Embassy /Ouagadougou
		• 11:30 am	• Ministry of Social Affairs / GTPE : Groupe de travail pour la protection de l'enfance
		• 2:00- 6pm	• Travel from Ouagadougou to Dedougou
Thursday April 6, 2017	Dédougou	• 9:30 to 10:30	• Primary School of Passakongo A (Interview with beneficiaries (children, PTA, MTA, Teachers, Parents))
		• 11:00 am	• Caisse populaire Dédougou – Micro finance Institution
		• 2 :00 pm to 3 :00 pm	• Regional Department of Labor (Partner in implementation of the CLMS)
Friday April 7, 2017	Bondokuy (Boucle du Mouhoun)	• 9 :00 to 10 :00	• Town hall of Bondokuy (Partner in implementation of CLMS)
		• 10:30 to 11:30	• Lycée departmental of Bondokuy: Interview with beneficiaries (children, PTA, MTA, Teachers, Parents)
		• 11:45 to 12:45	• VSLA at Bondokuy & interview with Livelihood Beneficiaries
Saturday April 8, 2017	Dédougou	• 9:00- 10:00 am	• <b>Interview with RCLES Coordination Staff at Dedougou</b>
		11 am to 2 pm	Travel from Dedougou to Bobo- Dioulasso
Sunday April 9, 2017	Bobo- Dioulasso	<b>REST DAY</b>	Sunday - Bobo- Dioulasso
Monday April 10,	Bobo-	• 7 am to 8 :30 am	Travel from Bobo-Dioulasso to Houunde

Date	Localities	Timing	Description
2017	Dioulasso		
	Houndé	• 8:30 – 8:40 am	Welcoming words at RCLES field office
		• 8:40 am	• Child Protection network /Tuy,
		• 9:15 am	Provincial Direction of Education at Tuy.
	Bouéré	• 10:20 am	• Primary school at Bouere A (15 km from Hounde Red track): Interview with beneficiaries (children, PTA, MTA, Teachers, Parents)
		• 1:50 pm	• Provincial Direction of Youth at Tuy,
		• 2:25 pm	• Provincial Direction of breeding
		• 2:55 pm	• Interview with 2 local craftsmen hosting youth for apprenticeship
Tuesday April 11, 2017	Bobo-Dioulasso	• 7 am to 8 :30 am	Travel from Bobo-Dioulasso to Hounde
	Ouakuy	• 9:45 am	• Interview with VSLA groups at Ouakuy,
		• 10:30 am	• Visit of center and interview with beneficiaries of vocational training: Non-formal Education center at Ouakuy
		• 12:00 am	• Interview with 2 volunteers at Ouakuy
	Houndé	• 2:15 pm	• Interview with RCLES coordination staff at Houndé
Wednesday April 12, 2017	Cascades (Banfora)	• 7 am to 8 :30 am	<b>Travel from Bobo-Dioulasso to Banfora</b>
		9:00 to 9:30	<b>Interview/Meeting:</b> • Provincial Direction of Agriculture / Comoé
		• 10 :15 to 10 :35	• Visits of 2 local craftsmen hosting youth for apprenticeship
		• 11:00 am to 12:00 am	• Primary school of Nianiagara (10 km from Banfora): Interview with beneficiaries (children, PTA, MTA, Teachers, Parents)
		• 12 :00 am to 1:00 pm	• Interview with VSLA groups at Nianiagara,
		• 3 to 4 pm	Interview with RCLES Coordination Staff at Banfora
		• 4 to 5 :30 pm	Travel from Banfora to Bobo-Dioulasso By Car

Date	Localities	Timing	Description
Thursday April 13, 2017	Bobo-Dioulasso	• 8 am to 3 :30 pm	Workshop preparation
		• 5:05 pm to 6:05 pm	<b>Travel by plane from Bobo-Dioulasso to Ouagadougou:</b> Departure by plane from Bobo at 5.05h pm (flight only available this day)
Friday April 14, 2017	Ouagadougou	• 8:30 am to 1:30 pm	Stakeholders' meeting
		• 3 pm to 5 pm	Debriefing: Rafael + RCLES staff

## ANNEX F: Stakeholder Meeting

Organization	Numbers of participants	Observations
Regional Direction of Labor	3	Hauts Bassins, Cascades et Boucle du Mouhoun
Regional Direction of youth	3	Hauts Bassins, Cascades et Boucle du Mouhoun
Regional Direction of social affairs	3	Hauts Bassins, Cascades et Boucle du Mouhoun
Regional Direction of Education	3	Hauts Bassins, Cascades et Boucle du Mouhoun
Ministry of Education	1	Resident
Ministry of Labor	4	DGESS (1), DGPS (2), Président COPIL (1): All residents
US Embassy	2	Resident and Assistant
Groupe de travail pour la protection de l'enfance (GTPE)	1	Resident
Ministry of social affairs	1	Resident
Ministry of Agriculture	1	Resident
Ministry of mines	1	Resident
Ministry of youth	1	Resident
PTA/MTA members	3	Houndé, Banfora et Dédougou
CBOs	3	Houndé, Banfora et Dédougou
UNPCB	1	Bobo-Dioulasso
Gold miners' union	1	Résident